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The American Quarterly on the SOVIET UNION

Vol. I

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Vladimir Mayakovsky, 1894-1930 Alexander Kaun

American-Soviet Relations Harriet Moore

Soviet Coal Comes of Age Ed Falkowski

The Soviet Union and the Spanish War John S. Curtiss

Soviet Advertising Henry Ware

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VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

1894-1930

By

ALEXANDER KAUN

I

Vladimir Mayakovsky was *the* poet of revolutionary Russia, in the same way as Vladimir Lenin was its organizer and leader. He personified and expressed the new order—a husky seven-footer striding the length and breadth of the earth, his thunderous bass roaring staccatoes unheard of in form and of shocking content. With lyric and epic, with satire and epigram, with drama on stage and screen, with poster and placard and marching song, in print and on the platform—Mayakovsky gave voice to the issues and events of Soviet Russia's formative years. Nine out of the ten volumes of his collected works (not counting three volumes of *addenda*) reflect phases of Russian reality after October, 1917, from the uprising itself through the civil wars, intervention and blockade, the "breathing spell" interlude of the NEP, and into the constructive years of the first Five-Year Plan. Mayakovsky's pen and bass performed a double service: they glorified the achievements of the revolution, they sang the courage of the masses, the red soldiers and sailors, the Young Communists, the might of the collective "Ivan," the greatness and simplicity of Lenin. At the same time Mayakovsky brandished his weapons to condemn and satirize the enemies of the revolution, the external as well as the lurking inner enemies—stupidity, ignorance, selfishness, pettiness, vulgarity, bureaucratic red tape, and other survivals of the old. While his prodigious output suffers from occasional unevenness, raucous exaggeration, slipshod wording and structure, it attains on the whole the definite goal of lending the revolution a distinct style. He had the satisfaction of realizing

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that this contribution would not end with his early death, for his style found able followers and continuers during his lifetime. In Aseyev, Selvinsky, Bezymensky, and others, the Mayakovsky chord still vibrates.

There was an apparent paradox in the fact that Mayakovsky, the best known representative of Futurist poetry, was acclaimed as the well nigh official poet of the proletarian revolution. Futurist art, of all branches and shades, reflected the morbid and moribund aspects of bourgeois society, the sense of fatigue and satiety, of disgust with the past and present, and the desire to escape into some vague and outlandish "futurity." In the destructive part of their program the Russian Futurists followed their parent, Marinetti and his Italo-French group of iconoclasts, enemies of traditions and museums, of grammar and authority. But whereas Marinetti's worship of speed and the machine brought him and his adherents into the arms of militarism, imperialism, and fascism, their Russian counterpart embraced the Soviet régime from its very outset. It is dialectically plausible for the offspring of a social order to turn against its begetter. Ridiculed and despised by the society which they represented and hated at the same time, the Russian Futurists greeted the Bolshevik Revolution as a complete divorce from the past. On the other hand, the Bolshevik government, isolated and ostracised from within and without, could ill afford to reject the only group of creative artists who promptly offered their support. Thus it came about that during the first years of the Soviet order, Futurist painters, sculptors, architects, stage designers and directors, theorists and poets received official sanction and aid.

This odd marriage, in some respects a marriage of convenience, did not last long. The rank and file of the proletariat, and also most of its leaders, notably Lenin, could not stomach the Futurist fare, though they suffered it as one of the extraordinary features of war and revolution. After the storm and stress of civil war, intervention, famine, epidemics and internal revolts, when life under the New Economic Policy began to assume a more normal aspect, the public expressed a demand for normal, understandable art. A gradual revulsion against

"formalism," preoccupation with form at the expense of contents, manifested itself in Party circles, and it grew in intensity as conditions of peaceful reconstruction permitted a closer attention to cultural matters. Futurism, and its derivatives and variants, proved ephemeral, once deprived of official backing. The movement lingered on for another decade, changing names and platforms, until it vanished under the mass onslaught against Formalism in music (Shostakovich) and in other arts. Needless to state, those artists who had something to say have gone on creating as individuals, with no regard for group labels.

The name of Vladimir Mayakovsky is inseparably linked with Russian Futurism, even though his place in the movement was unique all the time. As in the case of other creative artists, his theory and practice did not always coincide, and likewise, his poetic output far excelled his theoretical statements in originality and permanent value. Accordingly, Mayakovsky's poetry will concern us in a much larger measure than his Futuristic creed, or creeds. To be sure, he took this creed seriously. He was one of the four signers (with D. Burlyuk, A. Kruchonykh, and V. Khlebnikov) of the Cubo-Futurists' declaration "A Slap in the Face of Public Taste," back in 1912. As one of this Moscow group he fought both against the tyranny of the old, from Pushkin to Bryusov, and against the St. Petersburg Ego-Futurists, represented by the saccharine vulgarizer of the new current, Igor Severyanin. The Muscovites displayed native robustness and authenticity, as against the mincing mannerisms and cheap xenophilia of their brethren from the northern capital. It should be noted that when Marinetti gave a public address in Moscow, in February, 1914, Mayakovsky had the audacity to heckle and hiss this founder and high-priest of the movement, whose essential philistinism he scented through the perfumed film of his revolutionary phrases.

To put it briefly, Russian Futurism voiced a reaction against the various shades of Realism and Symbolism which dominated art, and poetry, in particular, on the eve of the war. In so far as it presented a revolt against stagnant tradition and hackneyed form, the current was healthful enough. Discounting the exaggerations and sensationalism of their manifestoes and verses

as the extremism of a new school bent on shocking the respectable, we must not fail to credit the Futurists with some definite contributions. Their savage ridicule of the old proved successful to a certain degree in discouraging the endless repetition of threadbare themes in shopworn forms. Their positive contribution was largely linguistic, in having broadened the medium of poetic expression by means of modifying old words, coining new ones, and employing *zaumny* language. They applied the word *zaumny*—"beyond sense," "irrational"—to the use of words not for their meaning (they are often quite meaningless), but for the sake of invoking a certain picture of emotion. Thus, a rhythmic conglomeration of sounds might onomatopoeically suggest an oriental city, or the Ukrainian speech, or Russian.¹ Some of these eccentrics reached the limits of absurdity in their efforts to set the word free from meaning, with rather dubious results even as to sound effects (Kruchonykh, for example). Velemir Khlebnikov, on the other hand, had an intimate knowledge of the Russian language, an inborn feeling for words and their architectonics, and a natural penchant for philological adventures. In his most daring innovations and nonsense-verses he betrayed these qualities that placed him above other Futurists, most of whom depended on whim and intuition when taking liberties with grammar and speech. Back in 1910, he became famous by a poem, in which the word *smyekh*, "laughter," was used in an endless variety of derivatives, most of them fantastic but all marked with an

1. A few examples. Here is Anton Lotov's "Melody of an Eastern City":

Khan khan da dash	Vaks bar dan yak
Shu shur i des	Zaza
Vilar' yagda	Siu sech bazd i
Suksan kardeksh	Gar yo zda be
Mak sa Mak sa	Men khatt zayde
Yakim den zar	Vin da chok me

And here is Vasilisk Gnyedov's suggestion of the Ukrainian tongue:

Hriba budik tsiri chipich-	Hulya laskav stohma rehotu tsvirka
Zdvina na kham dyaki,	Svitina zzila sankeh.
Koli za hich budin tsikavche	Baydry shliha shkapik ruko
Taras Shevcherko budyache skavche-	Da d'horu sila khmara
A ya z zirok poiv oparu	

The extremist Alexander Kruchonykh opined that in his following "quintain there is more of the national Russian than in all the poetry of Pushkin:"

dir, bull, shchil,
ubeshchur
skum
vi so bu
r l ez

authentic sound true to the flexibility of Russian words attained through prefixes and suffixes.²

What distinguished Mayakovsky from his fellow-futurists was the element of robust sense which he displayed even in his outlandish stunts. This was evidenced in his poetry more than in his theorizing passages, where he sounded as blatantly far-fetched and insolent as in his early public appearances, flaunting his notorious yellow waist. (" 'Tis good to hide your soul from inspection by wrapping it in a woman's yellow waist.") Yet one should note that even in this connection he showed on occasion keen judgment and a perspicacity that was almost prophetic. I have in mind his paper, "A Drop of Tar" (the Russian saying: "A drop of tar in a barrel of honey" is akin to the English "A fly in the ointment"), published in December, 1915, as an imaginary funeral oration over the alleged corpse of Futurism. Here he foreshadows the change of Futurism from the precious shriek of a handful of solipsists into the clarion call of a great revolution. You feel in this dirge both the spirit of the war that was raging at the moment and a portent of the oncoming revolution. He chides the "traditional" critics and the middle-aged readers ("the young men, to whom we are endeared, will not be back from the battlefield for some time") for jeering at the corpse: "Gentlemen, aren't you really sorry for this giddy red-tufted chap who was not so clever and a bit boorish, but always, Oh always daring and ardent?" But then he admits that he himself is not so sorry for the deceased, "for different reasons, to be sure." He asks them to recall the "first gala appearance of Russian Futurism, signalized by such a ringing 'slap in the face of public taste'," with its three memorable blows: against all canons that "reduce inspiration to ice," against the old language "too feeble to

2. The dancing hilarity of Khlebnikov's poem cannot be transmitted in another tongue. Still I have attempted an approximate version, keeping the original meter and rhythm:

Oh laugh forth, laugh laughadors!
Oh laugh on, laugh laughadors!
You who laugh in laughs, ha-hah, you who laphorize so laughly,
O laugh forth, laugh laugh belaulghly!
Oh of laughdoms overlaughly, laugh of laughish laughadors!
Oh forth laugh downright laughly, laugh of super-laughadors!
Laughery! Laughery!
Belaulgh, uplaugh, laughikins, laughikins,
Laughutelets, laughutelets!
Oh laugh forth, laugh laughadors!
Oh laugh on, laugh laughadors!

catch up with life's gallop," and against "the old great," the Pushkins, Dostoyevskys, Tolstoys, to be "thrown overboard from the steamship of modernity." This declaration of destructiveness and anarchism, derided by the philistines as "the eccentricity of madmen," "has proven to be a diabolical intuition embodied in the stormy Today," owing to the all-broadening war. The war and the impending "unknown" prompt Mayakovsky to call for new dimensions and new approaches: "Painter! Will you try to capture speeding cavalry with the tiny net of contours? . . . Poet! Do not seat a mighty battle into the rocking-chair of iambics and trochees. . . . Who can discern behind a Cossack whoop the warble of mandolinist Bryusov?" The new voice, born of war and of the revolution already glimmering on the horizon, Mayakovsky defines as Futurism:

Today we are all Futurists! The nation is Futurist!

Futurism has seized Russia in a deadlock.

You who fail to see Futurism ahead of you and are incapable of peering into your selves, you have raised a cry about its death. Yes, Futurism is dead—as a particular group, but it has suffused you all like a flood. Well, since Futurism as an idea of the chosen few is dead, we no longer need it. The first, destructive part of our program, we regard completed. So don't be surprised if today in place of a jester's rattle you will observe in our hands the design of an architect, and if the voice of Futurism, yesterday still soft from sentimental dreaminess, will pour forth with the vigor of a sermon.

II

In October, 1917, Mayakovsky saw his prophecy fulfilled. The Bolshevik Revolution, with its sweeping abolition of institutions, beliefs, traditions, attitudes and relationships, appealed to him as a cleansing hurricane, and won him over at once and fully. Next to Valery Bryusov, the leading Symbolist, Mayakovsky was the only prominent poet to place himself unreservedly at the service of the new order immediately upon its introduction. The last thirteen years of his life were his most active years and were wholly dedicated to the gigantic tasks that confronted the country. He did not hesitate to use his pen for "propaganda;" in fact nearly everything he wrote after October, 1917, was propaganda in behalf of the newly found

ideal. In his teens he had joined the Bolshevik faction, and paid for it with eleven months of prison. His allegiance was skin deep, and upon his release he entered the ranks of Bohemia, living boisterously and without aim, hating his environment and harboring only destructive passions. The October Revolution filled him with a purpose, gave vent for his hatred, and imbued him with a positive aspiration—to build a new life over the ruins of the old. How could he help being a propagandist, once in the grip of the all-absorbing ideal which dictated his thoughts and feelings and actions? He put all of himself into his work, whether it was a long epic, play, lyric, or a poster, a caricature (he drew powerful cartoons), a militant slogan, a short and poignant satire on one of the multiple evils and issues of the day. Whatever came from his pen had the sparkle of his talent, the unmistakable Mayakovsky touch that distinguished every utterance of his, regardless of the subject-matter. For to him form was all-important: the form in which the revolution could be expressed was to be as fresh and new as the very contents of the new life. This is why with Mayakovsky Futurism, in his own practice at any rate, was not an external whim but the inseparable essence of his creative self—and of the revolution.

In this belief as to the synonymy of Futurism and the revolution Mayakovsky and his friends soon came to grief. Their demand of a clean sweep of past models and authorities, and, next, their posing as the sole representatives of proletarian art, clashed with the official views. The Marxians have time and again emphasized (no one more strongly than Lenin) the evolutionary nature of socialist culture and its unavoidable discipleship of preceding masters and schools. They urged the Communists to try to absorb the best of bourgeois productions, and to give up the silly notion of hurling Pushkin “overboard from the steamship of modernity.” Equally opposed was the Party to any art group claiming hegemony within the state; the claim of the Futurists was resented as decidedly as that of the Proletarian RAPP³ a few years later.

Mayakovsky's theoretical views were neither solid nor stub-

3. “Russian Association of Proletarian Writers,” disbanded in 1932.

born; in any event, their effect on his poetry was rather uncertain. His confidence in the leadership of the Party impelled him to adapt these views time and again, with no detriment to the quality of his writings. In 1923, he organized the LEF (Left Front) organ, whose policy seemed to be a departure from pure Futurism, but which permitted a new variety of formalistic heresy, factualism. Four years later Mayakovsky began to publish *The New LEF*, more outspokenly "proletarian" in tone, but in September, 1928, he withdrew from the group, and delivered a public address under the title "To the Left of LEF." One year later he organized the group REF (Revolutionary Front), and in February, 1930, two months before his death, he joined the RAPP, at the moment considered 100 per cent orthodox and loyal. This shift of groups need not be taken seriously, as far as Mayakovsky's poetic integrity is concerned; but it is evident that the question as to where he should "belong" did trouble his mind and might have contributed to the final catastrophe, of which later. Whatever his theoretical vagaries, they did not prevent him from serving the new order in a tirelessly dynamic fashion, with pen and brush and voice, ever on the go, addressing public meetings, soldiers, factory workers in every part of vast Russia and even abroad, through Europe and the Americas.

Buffon's maxim is most strikingly illustrated by Mayakovsky, for in his case the style and the man were practically identical. Elemental by nature and of a rather elementary education, Mayakovsky grew up like some grand primitive, regarding himself and life with wonderment and admiration, free from traditions and all superimposed rules and forms. Man, with his two fine hands that "can move from the right to the left and from the left to the right," with his "precious mind" sparkling in the jewel-box of a cranium, with his marvelous red tongue, a voice that can shout "oh-ho-ho," and that "extraordinary lump beating under the wool of his waistcoat"—Mayakovsky is enraptured with his self ("Man," 1916). Society is a tyrant, it clips man's wings, chains him, emasculates life. In his satirical "Hymn to the Judge" (1915), galley slaves sing of their Peruvian paradise destroyed by a judge with eyes—"a pair of tin cans glimmering in a garbage hole." An orange-

blue peacock coming under the judge's eye, "austere like lenten," has his magnificent tail "fade momentarily." The judge has captured the colibri that flew in the prairies, and has shaved their "down and feathers." He has forbidden the flaming volcanoes rising from the valleys, putting up signs, "This Valley for Non-Smokers," and of course, he has banned Mayakovsky's verses as "another intoxicating drink." The poet, naturally, rebels against this man-made tyranny in all its ramifications. Such in a nutshell is Mayakovsky's early creed, a variant of individualistic anarchism, expressed in a suitable style.

"A Cloud in Trousers" is the most characteristic long poem of Mayakovsky (1915). Here primitive exuberance alternates with caustic satire and venomous hatred of the environment. The pattern is intricate, extremely individual notes interwoven with social motives. This complexity is foreshadowed in the "Prologue," where he "teases" his smug reader with the alternative of being "ferocious, or, changing tones like the sky, irreproachably tender, not a male but a cloud in trousers." The poet's "I" dominates the poem from the beginning to the end, varying in mood and key, the sardonically arrogant note prevailing. Thus, "I, insolent and caustic, shall satiate myself with mockery. There is not one white hair in my soul, nor is there any senile tenderness! Bethundering the world with the might of my voice, I go on — handsome, twentytwoyearold." Or, further down: "Glorify me! I am no match for the great. I inscribe 'nihil' over everything done before." "I shall go away, and insert into my wide open eye the sun as a monocle. . . . Ahead of me I shall lead on a chain Napoleon, like a dog." Here and there megalomania gives place to dog-like humility and the groan of an aching heart. Mayakovsky, loathing sentimentalism and hackneyed words, holds his own even when he faces such an ancient theme as unrequited love. He uses old words and much used similes with ironic exaggeration, lending his personal grief a unique, Gargantuan aspect, the tragic mingling with the comic and tempered by it. Rejected by "Maria," he telephones to his mother: "Hello! . . . Mama? Mama! Your son is superbly sick! Mama! He has a conflagration of the heart. Tell my sisters . . . he has no place to go to. Every word, even the jest which he belches through his singed mouth,

is hurled out like a naked prostitute from a house of shame that's on fire." Then he proceeds to picture the conflagration in his heart, with firemen in brass helmets and heavy boots scaling his ribs, and he is making a desperate and vain effort to "leap out of his heart." Despite this method, Mayakovsky fails to conceal the genuineness of his yearning pain.

In fact, he is most genuine and convincing when he opens his heart and becomes human-all-too-human. Pretensions are discarded, obsessions of grandeur are replaced by the humble cry of a big, an "enormous" body "at night craving to hide its resonance into something soft, womanly." His entreaties to "Maria," despite all the hyperboles, betray his helplessness before a primitive emotion. He does not speak of "love," of moonlight and flowers, and the rest of the hateful heritage; his words and similes are coarse and heavy, but, as he says with a smirk: "When my voice bellows lewdly . . . perhaps Jesus Christ smells the forget-me-nots of my soul." He modestly admits that, unlike the poet who composes sonnets for his beloved, he is "all of flesh, all man—he begs for her body as Christians pray, 'Give us this day our daily bread.' " "Maria!" he cries: "Your name I dread to forget, as a poet is afraid to forget a certain, in the pangs of night born, word, in majesty equal to god. Your body I shall guard and love, as a soldier hacked by the war, unwanted, nobody's, guards his only leg." Maria does not respond, and he "will once more, dark and downcast, take his heart, bedrip it with tears, and carry it as a dog carries into the kennel its paw run over by a train." Then he familiarly blasphemes "Mister God," ending with a threat to knife Him "from here to Alaska." The "tetraptych" concludes in a minor note: "The universe sleeps, its huge ear resting on a paw with claws of stars."

Parallel with this personal lyricism, the poem contains a motive of rebellion. Mayakovsky addresses the "street thousands—students, prostitutes, contractors," not as a superior, but as one of the lowly, "vomited by a consumptive night into the palm of Moscow." He is a twentieth century François Villon, a singer of the rabble, of criminals and street-walkers, of the low and the destitute. The poet, "a lipshouting Zarathustra of

the day," he "of the most golden mouth, whose every word newbears the soul, angeldays the body," calls upon the crowds to show self-respect. "You are not beggars, you dare not beg for alms!" He tells them that though convicts and lepers, they are "purer than Venetian azure." They are pockmarked and besmudged, "yet the sun would grow dim, on beholding the gold quartz of our souls!" Though "derided by today's tribe like a long scabrous anecdote," the poet assures the crowds that he can see where "men's dock-tailed eye stops short": prophetically, only slightly wrong about the year, he visions "the advent of the year Sixteen, in the thorny crown of revolutions." Mayakovsky proclaims himself the "forerunner" of the pending event: "I am where there's pain, everywhere. On every drop of a flowing tear I have crucified myself. . ." The "event" he describes graphically enough (we must remember, as he did, the savage war censorship of 1915): "Suddenly both the stormclouds and other cloud-folk raised an unheard-of racket in the sky, as though white-clad workmen dispersed, after declaring a furious strike against the sky. Raging, thunder crept out from behind a cloud, saucily blew its gigantic nostrils, and for a second the sky's face was distorted in a severe grimace of the iron Bismarck."

Mayakovsky visualizes the revolution as a bloody affair, unlike the majority of the Russian intelligentsia who had dreams of a gentle, fairytale-like transformation. He foresees another "General Galliffet come to shoot the rebels! Take the hands out your pockets, you strollers, pick up a stone, a knife, or a bomb, and he who has no hands let him come and butt with his forehead!" Parodying the New Testament, Mayakovsky roars: "Come ye who are hungry, sweaty, meek, soured in flea-ridden filth! Come! Mondays and Tuesdays we shall paint with blood into holidays! . . . And so that in the fever of battle flags may wave, as on any decent holiday—raise higher, O lamp-posts, the bloody corpses of shopkeepers." It is clear that at the moment Mayakovsky's vision of the revolution did not go beyond riot, anarchy, and slaughter.

I have dwelt at some length on "A Cloud in Trousers," because this poem epitomizes Mayakovsky's art both before and

after 1917. For although with the revolution he matured politically, and as a tribune of the people he began to write more simply, Mayakovsky remained essentially the same as a man and as a poet. This brings us back to the question of his style, which must be discussed if only briefly.

III

By his upbringing and makeup Mayakovsky was an enemy of the social order as it existed before 1917. He detested everything connected with it, above all its aesthetics, in which he saw the reflection of its tyranny and smugness. From his very first attempt at writing he steadfastly eschewed the use of words that comprise the stock and trade of conventional poetry. In all his voluminous output you will not find a single worn epithet for the description of nature or man or emotions. When he does employ canned phrases, he obviously holds his tongue in his cheek, as some of the quoted excerpts may show. Yet Mayakovsky's rich and colorful (at times even gaudy) vocabulary has nothing of the *zaumny*, irrational, element introduced by some Futurists. He does not coin entirely new words, but rather multiplies and variegates existing roots by means of the endless choice of prefixes and suffixes that makes the Russian speech so elastic, precise, and suggestive. By taking liberties with grammar and syntax, by the unexpected juxtaposition of sounds and words, he lends freshness and newness to otherwise familiar language. He does not hesitate to abbreviate or augment words, or to combine two into one, for the sake of nuance and euphony, nor to change adverbs into adjectives, verbs into nouns, and *vice versa*, nor to omit prepositions, when the meaning is clear without them, especially when their presence may produce cacophony. His language thus escapes being smooth and neat, calm and correct "like the pulse of a corpse." It belongs not to the study or salon, but to the street, and is therefore bold, irregular, trenchant, and laconic.

Similarly, in prosody Mayakovsky revolts against canonized aesthetics. The melodiousness of Russian tonic-syllabic verse nauseated him with its trim regularity. His verse is based on

the number of stressed syllables in a line, with no regard for the non-stressed syllables; this results in flexible tonality and greater freedom of rhythm. Coupled with metric irregularity is the typographic feature of broken lines. Mayakovsky writes not for silent reading, but for loud declamation. Not trusting punctuation marks (he uses few, mostly points of interrogation and exclamation), he directs the reader's intonation by making each line an accented unit, virtually a caesura. Accordingly his line often consists of one word. The passages I have quoted would have to be read differently, if printed as in the original. This one, for instance, from page 12:

Maria!
Your name I dread to forget,
as a poet is afraid to forget
a certain
in the pangs of night born word,
in majesty equal to god.
Your body
I shall guard and love
as a soldier
hacked by the war,
unwanted,
nobody's,
guards his only leg.

This rhythm became particularly apt during the revolutionary years, when Mayakovsky acted as a "drummer" (he drew endless sonorities out of *baraban*, the Russian word for "drum"), addressing himself to great masses, to marching soldiers. His celebrated "Left March," (1918) dedicated to the red sailors, in which each of the four stanzas ends with the refrain

Left!
Left!
Left!

was recited collectively in pageants and processions, the marchers following the beats of the lines, as Mayakovsky meant them to be declaimed. His is, indeed, a revolutionary rhythm, dynamic and elemental, of a zigzaggy tempo.

Mayakovsky's verse, when not free or blank, is rhymed in the most whimsical way. He has discovered a wealth of consonant possibilities, for the most part unprecedented in Russian

poetry. Subtle inner rhymes alternate with combining several words to echo the ending of a previous line, and some of his rhyming stunts verge on puns, and make one question the poet's earnestness.

More important a feature of Mayakovsky's style are his metaphors. Here he manifestly differs both from realist and symbolist poets, for his images are neither of the everyday variety, as with the former, nor do they represent abstractions, as with the latter. In the language of the Schoolmen, he strives after *realiora*. He is never abstract, and even supernatural images he drags down to earth and renders concrete and sensory. At the same time he clothes his metaphors in a hyperbolic form, deliberately, and often not without humor, exaggerating dimensions and concepts. The description of his heart on fire, quoted above, is a case in point. After 1917, especially in his *Mystery Bouffe* (1918) and in *150,000,000* (1919), Mayakovsky made abundant use of this hyperbolic style. The revolutionary upheaval, complicated by wars, invasions, blockade, and their concomitant misery and suffering, heightened the tone of life, quickened its tempo, in a word—lent life a heroic style. Mayakovsky felt in his element, employing, and even enhancing his hyperbolic method, now that his country and his people defeated seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and made the improbable real. There is elemental grandeur in his Unclean Ones storming the universe (*Mystery Bouffe*), or in his titanic Woodrow Wilson, personifying the capitalist order, and equally improbable Ivan, the collective embodiment of the victorious proletariat (*150,000,000*). The revolutionary period, its formative years, its groping efforts at destroying and building, its Homeric aspect, found a suitable poet in Mayakovsky.

Space does not permit an analysis of Mayakovsky's huge output. Aside from his numerous small poems—lyrics, satires, marches, propaganda pieces on various issues of the moment, verses for children, essays and speeches, mention should be made of his large compositions. Prior to 1917, he published, besides "A Cloud in Trousers," a tragedy "Vladimir Mayakovsky" (1912), two cycles of "War" (1914 and 1917), "Flute-Spinal Chord" (1916), "Man" (1916). The dominant

motive during this phase is "I," "Mayakovsky," preoccupation with himself and his moods—"Today I shall play on a flute. On my own spinal chord"; "To myself, the beloved, are these lines dedicated by the author"; "Mayakovsky's Nativity"; "Mayakovsky's Passions"; "Mayakovsky's Ascension"; "Mayakovsky in Heaven"; "Mayakovsky to the Ages," and similar themes and titles. Along with this motive, the poet voices his disgust with the world as it is, he hurls invectives and threats at the smug and stagnant social order, but he sees no way out, and consequently sounds a rather dismal note.

About nine-tenths of his work Mayakovsky wrote after 1917. During the last thirteen years of his life he grew to his full stature. The revolution and its multiple tasks filled his void, and gave meaning and contents to his resentments, grievances, and vague aspirations. His style, too, matured, became free from obscurity, from trickery, from an excessive burden of similes, and from dispensable coarseness. A style of the street, it now represented not the street of strutting philistines, criminals, pimps, and prostitutes, but the streets and squares of a country jolted from age-old apathy to a desperate struggle for its existence and for a finer life. Mayakovsky was proud to consider himself a worker, a sharer in the national travail, never too squeamish about using his pen or brush or voice for "propaganda." "I have the feeling of being a Soviet plant, manufacturing happiness. I do not want to be plucked, after the day's toils, like a flower off the meadow. . . . I want the Gosplan to sweat in discussions, while assigning my yearly tasks. I want the pen to be put on the same footing with the bayonet. I want Stalin in the name of the Politbureau to read reports on the production of verse along with those on pig-iron and steel."

During these arduous years, in the rare leisure he could find from the daily "attacks" he waged against enemies of the new order, and from his frequent travels at home and abroad, Mayakovsky managed to compose a few large poems and plays. Of the latter, two were in verse—*Mystery Bouffe* and *150,000,000*, and two in prose—*The Bedbug* (1928) and *The Bathhouse* (1930). The former two are heroic rhapsodies of the revolution at its height, while the prose plays castigated philis-

tine smugness which began to raise its head in the "normal" years that followed the civil wars. Among his travel poems the cycle on America (1925-1926) is worth noting: his admiration for New York and its technological advancement does not blind him against the atrocities of its economic order. His poem " 'Tis Good!" (1927) voices his militant optimism about the land of Soviets. In "Of This" (1923) he reverts to his old pre-occupation with his self and his futile loves. His most ambitious long poem is "Vladimir Ilyich Lenin" (1924), written shortly after Lenin's death. The announcement of Lenin's death by Kalinin before the Congress of Soviets, and the scene of the funeral, are Mayakovsky's highest achievements. There is not one loud word or obvious emotionalism, and the author's unwonted reserve intensifies the tragic sense of the moment.

IV

The life and work of Mayakovsky have been an open book, largely owing to the extrovert nature of his verse. He has turned himself inside out, flaunted intimate details of his past and present, painted a full-length and-depth self-portrait. Everything about him, as suggested previously, was elemental and elementary, therefore simple and lucid. Everything, except for one thing: his end. The public was shocked and dumbfounded, when on April 14, 1930, Mayakovsky shot himself.

The premature death of a poet became, one might say, a tradition in Russia. One need only mention Pushkin and Lermontov, killed in duels at the age of thirty-seven and twenty-six, respectively; then, omitting other examples and taking into account only the first dozen years after the revolution, we come on the execution of the Acmeist poet, Gumilev, at the age of thirty-five, the deaths from physical exhaustion and mental apathy of the Symbolist Blok and the Futurist Khlebnikov (forty-one and thirty-seven), the suicides of the Imagist Esenin and of our Mayakovsky, thirty and thirty-six years old. All of them died primarily because of their failure to adjust themselves to the environment. Soviet public opinion was surprised by the death of Mayakovsky, because he had given no obvious sign of maladjustment.

On the contrary, five years previously, Esenin, a gifted flaxen-

haired peasant lad from the province of Ryazan, cut his wrists and hanged himself, victim of drunken debauches, ill-digested fame and notoriety, and of an ideally mismatched marriage (to Isadora Duncan). Dipping the pen into the blood of his slashed wrists (there was a shortage of ink at the time), Esenin scribbled a farewell poem that ended with the lines:

In this life 'tis nothing new to die,
But nor is it more new, of course, to live.

In an essay on "How to Make Verses," reminiscent of Poe's would-be confession as to how he wrote his "Raven," Mayakovsky tells us of his resolution to counteract Esenin's gesture. Quoting the last two lines of Esenin's poem, he observed: "It became at once clear to me, how many vacillating ones that verse, precisely *verse*, would draw into the noose and under the revolver." Mayakovsky's "To Sergey Esenin" (1926) was written in his usual bantering tone, but one feels keenly the warmth of emotion and the personal concern of the poet chiding his brother for his faint-hearted act. He admits that "this time is rather hard for the pen," but then, he asks, "where, when, what great man has chosen a worn and easy path?" Life must be remade—such is the task of the moment. He ends the poem with a paraphrase of Esenin's lines:

In this life
 'tis not hard to die.
To perform life
 is far more difficult.

This sentiment deceived the public as to Mayakovsky's state of mind. He probably deceived himself into believing that he was perfectly at home and at ease under the Soviet regime. There is no question about the utter sincerity and absolute loyalty of his attitude toward the new order. His service to the "attacking class" was both whole-hearted and effective, the latter being acknowledged even by Lenin⁴, who personally

4. In the *Izvestia* for March 5, 1922, Mayakovsky satirized bureaucratic methods of endless sessions and discussions of trivial matters, in a poem titled "Outsitters." The next day Lenin mentioned this satire in a public speech:

"I do not belong to the admirers of his poetic talent, though I fully admit my incompetence in that field. But it's a long time since I've experienced such pleasure from the political and administrative point of view. In his poem Mayakovsky makes deadly fun of (bureaucratic) meetings, and ridicules Communists who sit and oversit in sessions. I do not know about the poetry, but I vouch that politically it is absolutely correct. We do find ourselves in the position (and one must say, a silly position it is) of men who are perpetually in session, who compose commissions, plans—to infinity."

Needless to say, Lenin's praise was of inestimable encouragement to the poet who declared himself "a sewer-cleaner and water-carrier, mobilized and summoned by the Revolution."

failed to appreciate Mayakovsky's poetry. But neither can there be a question about the inner split experienced by the poet most of the time, even or especially when he protested his buoyant faith the loudest. His difficulty of "performing a life" consisted in harmonizing the moods and whims of the Bohemian individualist that he had been up to 1917, with the convictions of the disciplined Bolshevik he valiantly strove to be thereafter. His last poems, especially "Of This" and "In Full Voice" (1930), show the tragic contradiction within him in a cumulative intensity that proved catastrophic. He confesses that time and again he made an effort to stifle the individualist in him, by "putting his foot on the throat of his song." But the half-smothered note persisted as an overtone, and insinuated itself now and then as a moan. Such were the recurrent motives of loneliness, of suicide, of irresponsible love, of being misunderstood and underrated by his contemporaries. Here belongs his masterly "Jubilean," where he takes the bronze Pushkin for a stroll off his pedestal on the Moscow square, and pours his heart out to him in a half-jesting tone, behind which one feels his profound pain. He confides to his great predecessor that soon he too would die, and then their names would stand not so wide apart in the alphabet of the great.

The immediate causes of his suicide were apparently a combination of illness (the grippe), loneliness, persecution, and unrequited love. Although he had parted company with Futurism and LEF, and had joined the arch-orthodox RAPP, some zealots continued to taunt him and to doubt his devotion. A few days before his death he declared publicly: "They hang so many dogs on me, and accuse me of so many sins . . . that at times I feel like going off somewhere for a couple of years, only not to hear the abuse." His intimate friends, notably Aseyev, have much to say about the nagging and sarcastic remarks Mayakovsky had to suffer from those Torquemadas. As to his well-known friendship with the wife of a close comrade and collaborator, Mayakovsky's farewell-poem contains a sufficient hint that not all was smooth in their relations. Here are a few lines from his final message:

It is already past one.
 You must be in bed.
 In the night
 the milky way
 a silver Oka River.
 I am in no hurry
 and am not going
 to wake you
 with special telegrams
 and disturb you.
 As they say
 the incident is closed.
 Love boat smashed against environment.
 You and I
 are quits.
 No need listing
 mutual hurts
 sorrows
 and grievances.
 Look
 how peaceful the world.
 Night
 has imposed on the sky
 a starry contribution.
 At just such hours
 you rise up
 and speak
 to ages
 to history
 to creation.

Some of the puns and nuances are of course lost in translation. In the final version the lines "you and I are quits" were changed to "life and I are quits." Mayakovsky was fastidious in his last hours, and tried to make his death as neat and free from scandal as possible. In a letter he addressed before his death to "Mama, sisters, comrades" he apologized for what he was about to do and ended with the request: "Please don't gossip. The deceased disliked that awfully."

Let us resist, therefore, the temptation to gossip. It is clear, "clear to the point of a hallucination," as Mayakovsky would say, that the poet was not a monolith. His inner conflicts made

his life a tragedy, but they were hardly detrimental to his poetry. The two, or more, selves of this monumental child of nature were voiced forcefully and with unique skill. Regardless of his personal "deviations," Mayakovsky's work will live chiefly as an expression of the Will to Revolution.

FIVE YEARS OF AMERICAN-SOVIET RELATIONS

By

HARRIET MOORE

November 16 marked the fifth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The sixteen years from 1917 to 1933 in which the two governments exchanged no formal representation had been years of growing interest between the two peoples. Against the colorful background of American-Russian relations marked by such events as the purchase of Alaska, American mediation in the Russo-Japanese war, American intervention in Siberia countering Japanese occupation, American relief work in the Russian countryside in the years after the World War, new interests had developed since the war: "Amerikanskaya Tekhnika" had become the dream of Soviet builders and Soviet experiments in many fields of art and sociology held the attention of Americans. The tremendous Soviet trade with America which grew up under the first Five-Year Plan and the stream of American tourists eager to see for themselves the new socialist society reflected this trend, and, in the years just preceding 1933, the developing Far Eastern war had revealed a further community of interests between the two countries, arising out of geographical position and international policy. That lack of diplomatic relations was choking off further development of these mutually profitable cultural, commercial and international relations was recognized by the two governments in their exchange of notes, initiating the conversations for the establishment of relations:

"Since the beginning of my administration, I have contemplated the desirability of an effort to end the present abnormal relations between the hundred and twenty-five million people of the United States and the hundred and sixty million people of Russia.

"It is most regrettable that these great peoples, between whom a happy tradition of friendship existed for more than a century

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to their mutual advantage, should now be without a practical method of communicating directly with each other.

"The difficulties that have created this anomalous situation are serious, but not, in my opinion, insoluble; and difficulties between great nations can be removed only by frank, friendly conversations. If you are of similar mind, I should be glad to receive any representatives you may designate to explore with me personally all questions outstanding between our countries. . . ."

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

". . . I have always considered most abnormal and regrettable a situation wherein, during the past sixteen years, two great republics—the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—have lacked the usual methods of communication and have been deprived of the benefits which such communication could give. I am glad to note that you also reached the same conclusion.

"There is no doubt that difficulties, present or arising, between two countries can be solved only when direct relations exist between them; and that, on the other hand, they have no chance for solution in the absence of such relations. I shall take the liberty further to express the opinion that the abnormal situation, to which you correctly refer in your message, has an unfavorable effect not only on the interests of the two states concerned, but also on the general international situation, increasing the element of disquiet, complicating the process of consolidating world peace and encouraging forces tending to disturb that peace. . . ."

MIKHAIL KALININ

In considering the period since recognition, American-Soviet relations may best be taken up under the headings of diplomatic relations, commercial relations, cultural relations, and relations in the international scene generally.

Diplomatic Relations

In the exchange of notes in November, 1933, several matters of general relations between the countries were taken up. These included the reciprocal pledge of non-interference in the internal affairs of the other country; the guarantee to American citizens of the right to free exercise of liberty of conscience and religious worship; the guarantee to American citizens of the right to legal protection not less favorable than that

granted the citizens of the most-favored-nation; the assignment to the United States government of all claims which the Soviet government, as successor to prior governments of Russia, might have due from the United States and its nationals; and the waiving of all claims arising out of American participation in Siberian intervention subsequent to January 1, 1918. The debt claims of the United States against the Soviet Union amounted to somewhere in the neighborhood of \$800,000,000 and included, in addition to a loan made by the United States to the Kerensky government, the claims of private firms for compensation for their properties nationalized by the Soviet Union. Counter-claims of the USSR arose out of American participation in intervention, following the Revolution.

The Soviet government has never recognized the debts contracted by the Tsarist government or by the Kerensky and other transitional governments, on grounds very similar to those on which the debts of the Confederacy were rejected by the Federal government. In regard to compensation for nationalized property, while the right of the government to confiscate property is not under question, the Soviet government has always been willing to consider some kind of a mutually advantageous settlement by way of compensation. Negotiations on the settlement of these claims were carried on intermittently during 1934 and 1935, but finally broke down, reportedly because of failure to agree on the terms of credit to be granted to the Soviet Union in return for some form of settlement. The details of the negotiations were not made public, but it was generally supposed that the proposal finally under discussion provided for a loan of some kind to be made to the USSR at interest rates above the market rates, the excess interest payments to be used by the United States government to pay off the claims of private concerns against the Soviet Union. Since that time, the matter has not proceeded further, but it clearly has not been written off in the minds of the business concerns, since, in 1937, an Association of American Creditors of Russia was formed, including the Singer Manufacturing Co., the New York Life Insurance Co., Eastman Kodak Co., Parke Davis Co., Socony Vacuum and International Harvester.

Commercial Relations

Trade between the United States and the Soviet Union has been growing slowly since recognition. Although it has not attained the proportions which it had under the first Five-Year Plan, the share of the United States in Soviet imports has been rising steadily, and it held first place in 1937.² Furs at present are by far the largest item in American imports from the Soviet Union, while machinery continues to make up the bulk of Soviet purchases in this country. Much of the trade with American firms is carried on through Amtorg, the Soviet trading corporation in this country, but at the present time an increasing number of firms are dealing directly with the Soviet commissariats in Moscow.

Following recognition, steps were taken to facilitate Soviet-American trade: the restrictions on imports of Soviet gold, timber and matches, imposed in earlier years³ were lifted in January, 1934, and in February a special Export-Import Bank was set up under the R.F.C. for financing trade with the USSR. However, the bank never came into operation, because in April of that year the Johnson Act was passed, prohibiting loans to foreign governments in default to the United States—a category which, according to American interpretation, included the Soviet Union. While no definite ruling was issued barring the bank from operation, the bank pledged itself not to function, pending settlement of the debt questions then under negotiation.

Offsetting this obstacle to financial aid to the growth of the trade, a trade agreement was signed in July, 1935, under which the Soviet Union agreed to purchase at least \$30,000,000 of goods in the American market during the succeeding 12 months, in return for receiving the benefits of the tariff concessions granted in the United States reciprocal trade agreements. This, in effect, removed the Soviet Union from the black list re-

2.

	SOVIET-AMERICAN TRADE (In Millions of Dollars)										
	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937
Exports to USSR	64.1	72.5	81.5	114.4	103.9	12.6	8.9	15.0	24.7	33.4	42.9
Imports from USSR	12.1	13.9	21.5	24.4	13.8	9.7	12.1	12.3	17.8	20.5	30.7
3. Order on imports of Soviet gold—Nov. 26 and Dec. 23, 1920.
Order on imports of Soviet pulpwood and lumber—Feb. 10, 1931.
Order on imports of Soviet matches—May 10, 1930.

garding tariff concessions, applied to defaulting nations. The same agreement was renewed in 1936, and in 1937 the terms of the agreement were improved, with the USSR raising its guaranteed purchases to \$40,000,000 and receiving general most-favored-nation treatment. A further agreement was included, lifting the \$2.00 per ton tax on imports of Soviet anthracite, which in turn the Soviet Government would limit to 400,000 tons per year. These same agreements were extended to cover 1938-39.

At the present time, there are factors making for the increase in trade, as well as those checking its growth. The lack of adequate credit facilities, as compared with those offered in some other countries, and the relatively slow growth of Soviet sales in the United States both act as a brake on Soviet purchases in the American market. On the other hand, the USSR is rapidly cutting its trade to a minimum with aggressor nations and shifting it to the democracies, as the trade with Germany shows—for the first eight months of 1938, Soviet exports to Germany were 58 million rubles as compared with 73 million in 1937; Soviet imports from Germany were 37 million rubles as against 172 million for eight months of 1937. Moreover, a large part of Soviet imports consist of technical equipment and specialized machinery which American manufacturers are peculiarly equipped to supply.

Cultural Relations

Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States in all other fields—scientific, artistic, educational—have multiplied many fold since the establishment of diplomatic relations. They are, however, still far from commensurate with the interest existing in both countries. Many Americans wish to hear Soviet music, to see the new art and theatre, and to learn of Soviet scientific work. In turn, they are glad to send material on their art, science and technology to the USSR. Yet, barriers of language and, recently, the exigencies of the increasingly tense international situation stand in the way of freer and more generous interchange between the two countries. Removal of

technical obstacles would bring a great increase in the flow of mutually beneficial cultural interchange.

In the sciences, there has been considerable interchange, with the two congresses held in Moscow—the Physiologists Congress in 1935 and the Geological Congress in 1937—offering many American scientists the opportunity to travel extensively in the Soviet Union and to study the scientific work being done there. American scientific and technological advances have long been followed with keen interest by the Soviets. In turn, the work of the Pavlov Physiological Institute, as well as achievements in the Soviet Arctic, has attracted considerable attention in this country. Other forms of exchange have grown out of the neighboring geographical positions of the two countries, with Alaska reaching out to meet Siberia in the Arctic. With the discovery of the “weather kitchen” at the Pole, the meteorological services on both sides of the Arctic have been able to supplement each other; and pilots on inter-continental flights have chosen the short routes passing between the two countries. This neighborliness has been emphasized time and again: in 1934, after directing the rescue of the Cheliuskin Expedition, Otto Schmidt passed through New York on his way back to Moscow; Howard Hughes, in his record-breaking dash around the world, crossed the USSR, thus repaying the visits of the Soviet Trans-Polar fliers the year before; Jimmy Mattern, lost in Siberia on a round-the-world flight, was rescued by Levanevsky; and in turn, part of the rescue effort to find Levanevsky and his companions was directed from Alaska and the Canadian North by Sir Hubert Wilkins and several American fliers.

In the field of academic study, the USSR is becoming a more frequent item on the agenda of American learned societies and is receiving more serious attention generally. Scholars in the United States are particularly interested in Soviet problems, especially as they parallel those familiar in American history—problems of developing vast frontier areas; policies for a country of many nationalities, races and creeds; questions of large-scale agriculture and mass-production industry. Some exchange of students has taken place in the past, with young Soviet en-

gineers studying at American technical colleges and American students completing courses of study at Soviet theatrical schools, schools of jurisprudence, of pedagogy, of economics and others. A number of American scholars are corresponding members of various institutes in the Soviet Academy of Sciences and many others maintain close contacts with individual scientists and institutions.

In the past few years a more fundamental approach to the study of both countries has been made possible through increasing study of the respective languages, thus giving access to original sources. In the Soviet Union, English is rapidly replacing German as the foreign language taught in all the schools; here, intensive Russian language courses have been instituted. Initiated by the Institute of Pacific Relations, these intensive courses were held at Harvard in the summer of 1934, at Columbia in 1935, at the University of California in 1936 and 1937 and then were incorporated into the regular summer sessions at several universities. The results of this academic interest are reflected in the number of serious studies included in the *List of Current Research Projects on Russia and the Soviet Union*, compiled annually by the American Russian Institute.

Perhaps because of the world reputation of Russian musicians and composers, relations in the music world have continued fruitful and show promise of considerable growth. The works of Soviet composers like Prokofieff, Miaskovsky and Shostakovich are widely performed here, and Serge Prokofieff has visited this country several times as soloist with leading symphony orchestras. In turn, well-known American concert artists have toured the Soviet Union to be enthusiastically greeted by capacity audiences. It is very much to be hoped that the New York World's Fair will provide the occasion for more Soviet musicians and composers to visit this country.

There is somewhat less to show in the fine arts. But one major Soviet art exhibit has been shown in this country in recent years, first at the Pennsylvania Museum of Art in 1934, later in other cities, with a final showing at the Squibb Gallery in New York, November, 1936. On the other hand, over one

hundred American artists contributed their work for a collection to form the nucleus of a new art museum in Birobidzhan. To continue this exchange, it is very much to be hoped that the Museum of Modern Western Art in Moscow will find it feasible to lend some of its masterpieces to the modern art collection to be shown at the New York World's Fair.

More than in any other cultural field, developments in Soviet drama have provoked interest and study. The names of Stanislavsky and Meyerhold are probably as well known to the serious student of drama in this country as are those of Belasco and Frohman. Theatre festivals held in Moscow and Leningrad during the last five years have drawn hundreds of American devotees of the theatre to the Soviet Union. In cinema, Soviet realistic treatment of subject matter has received the attention in this country which Hollywood technical skill has met in the USSR. Each year about twenty of the best Soviet films are shown in many cities throughout the United States, and the excellence of some of these productions has been widely recognized in this country.

Literature has proved one of the best media of cultural exchange. Gorky, bridging from the classical era of Dostoevsky, Turgenyev and Tolstoi to the modern Soviet era, continues to be widely read here, as are the famous Soviet novels of Sholokhov, *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *Soil Uplturned*. Next in popularity come the writings of Ilf and Petrov, of Ilin and of Kataev. Further, Soviet children's books are receiving wide notice and sale through leading American publishing houses. Worthy of note among new juvenile titles are *The Cautious Carp* and *Stradivari* which were selected this year by the New York Public Library in its list of 50 books recommended as gifts for children for their "originality of conception of the new, fresh treatment of the familiar, suitability of format, as well as excellence in matters of design, printing, and production of books for children." The Soviet public, in its turn, is well-read in the works of Mark Twain, Jack London, Upton Sinclair, Theodore Dreiser, Walt Whitman, Ernest Hemingway and others whose works have been published there in editions often exceeding in size the American editions. That a wider range of literary exchange does not take place can per-

haps be ascribed to two factors—the lack of a copyright agreement between the two countries and the difficulties and expense of adequate translation. If obstacles of this sort could be minimized, the peoples of the two countries could better know each other through their literature.

The range of cultural contacts between the Soviet Union and the United States was perhaps best summed up in the extensive celebration of the Pushkin Centenary in 1937. Biographies, translations, appreciations of this best-loved Russian poet were issued by several major American publishing houses. Simultaneous memorial celebrations, featuring lectures, symposia and readings of his work were held in many cities throughout the country. Radio programs and concerts of compositions inspired by Pushkin's poems (16 operas have been composed to his works) were sponsored in key cities; New York's Metropolitan Opera gave a special performance of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Coq d'Or* to mark the occasion. Exhibits depicting his life and works were circulated and served to familiarize the American public with this great figure in Russia's cultural heritage.

To millions of Americans who will visit the New York World's Fair this summer, the exhibits at the Soviet Pavilion will provide information on Soviet life and culture in many instances hitherto unknown to the American public. To a lesser degree the various exhibits which have been circulated during the last few years to educational institutions throughout this country have stimulated great interest for a further study of the Soviet Union. These exhibits have covered developments in education, housing and town planning, the care of mothers and children, general economic and social life, and the life of the many nationalities that make up the USSR. Now in preparation for wide showing, also, are exhibits of books and of work in the Soviet Arctic. Tentative plans for an exchange of exhibits on science and industry are also under discussion.

Relations in the General International Scene

Even before the resumption of diplomatic relations, signs were not lacking that the two great continental nations might

work toward cooperation on the side of peace in the balance of international relations. Neither had been signatory to the Versailles Treaty, neither was a member of the League of Nations; the only tie between them was that the United States was one of the initiators of the Kellogg-Briand Pact of Paris and the USSR was the first nation to put it into effect, through a special agreement with its neighbors. But the first time that the two nations had directly addressed each other was when President Roosevelt sent an appeal to 54 nations on May 16, 1933, urging economic cooperation and complete disarmament. He said:

" . . . If all nations will agree wholly to eliminate from possession and use the weapons which make possible a successful attack, defense automatically will become impregnable and the frontiers and independence of every nation will become secure. . . ."⁴

and for the period of progressive disarmament, he urged:

" . . . that all nations of the world should enter into a solemn and definite pact of non-aggression, that they should solemnly reaffirm the obligations they have assumed to limit and reduce their armaments, and, provided these obligations are faithfully executed by all the signatory powers, individually agree they will send no armed force of whatsoever nature across their frontiers. . . ."⁴

The Soviet government greeted this appeal with interest and enthusiasm, since disarmament had always been, in the Soviet view, the key to peace: "Total and general disarmament is the only effective guarantee against war and its devastating effects," Litvinov had said to the Disarmament Conference, in February, 1932. Failing that, a network of non-aggression pacts had been the Soviet Union's "second-best" means of assuring peace. Aside from this coincidence of views, the very inclusion of the USSR in the list of nations receiving this message was a departure from precedent and seemed to indicate that the new administration recognized the importance of the USSR in any attempts to restore peace to the world.

Following recognition, it again was cooperation for peace that was played up by both parties, in marking the significance of the occasion. In a letter to Litvinov on his departure from

4. *New York Times*, May 16, 1933.

Washington, following the successful negotiations for recognition, Roosevelt wrote:

" . . . I am profoundly gratified that our conversations should have resulted in the restoration of normal relations between our peoples and I trust that these relations will grow closer and more intimate with each passing year. The cooperation of our governments in the great work of preserving peace should be the cornerstone of an enduring friendship. . . ."⁵

Litvinov's farewell speech struck the same note, when he said:

" . . . After all that I have just said, can there be any question of the gain to both our countries from the restoration of economic cooperation between them, from the opening up of possibilities to use their respective resources in this sphere? Can the question arise as to whether or not the cultural collaboration of the scientists and artists of our two great republics will bear rich fruit for the benefit of humanity? What is still more important can any question arise as to whether both the United States and the Soviet Union will benefit from the joining of their efforts in the cause so important to both of them—the great work of preserving peace? Who can doubt that the combined voices of these two giants will make themselves heard and that their joint efforts will weight the scales in favor of peace? . . ."⁵

Since that time, the declarations of the two governments have contained a strikingly similar point of view on the general international situation. On July 16, 1937, Secretary of State Hull made a declaration to the world that wars anywhere in the world would have an impact upon the fate of all countries and that therefore treaties must be rigidly observed, obligations fulfilled, commercial barriers removed and armaments reduced. In reply to this, the Soviet Commissariat of Foreign Affairs stated:

" . . . There is no doubt that tension, conflicts and frictions in international relations and particularly menaces of hostile clashes, even though at first affecting only two or a few powers, are likely eventually to affect the rights and interests of all nations. This view has found expression in the principles of indivisibility of peace and of collective security advanced by Mr. Litvinov at the League of Nations. Mr. Litvinov shares the other views contained in the statement of Mr. Hull, which are in harmony with the principles such as the abstinence of all nations from use of force in pursuit of policy and from interference in the internal affairs of

5. *New York Times*, Nov. 25, 1933.

other nations, the adjustment of international problems exclusively by processes of peaceful negotiations and agreements, the modification of the conditions of treaties only by amicable agreements of the interested powers, the equality of all nations, the reduction of armaments and so forth.

"In particular the Soviet Government presented at Geneva as far back as ten years ago a plan for complete general disarmament and also for a partial reduction in armaments. Furthermore, the Soviet Government, again at Geneva, presented a proposal for the organization of a permanent peace conference within the framework of which the cooperative efforts mentioned in Mr. Hull's statement could be exerted. In practice, the present international situation, full of threats to general peace, arising now in one, now in another continent, demands, in the opinion of Mr. Litvinov, the most energetic counteractivity on the part of all nations. . . ."⁶

In these two statements are embodied the general principles of the two countries, which have been repeated often since: that war in any part of the globe is the concern of all nations; that disarmament is the way to ensure peace; that treaty obligations must be faithfully observed. A few more examples of such statements may well be cited, to show the persistence with which this theoretical view has been held in both countries. In March, 1938, Litvinov issued a statement to the press, calling for an international conference to consider the world situation:

" . . . The present international situation places before all peace-loving states, and the great powers in particular, the question of their responsibilities for the destinies of the people of Europe, and not only for Europe. The Soviet Government, being cognizant also of its obligations under the League Covenant and the Kellogg-Briand Pact, and under the treaties of mutual assistance concluded with France and Czechoslovakia, I can state on its behalf that, on its part, it is ready, as before, to participate in collective actions that would be decided upon jointly with it and that would aim at checking the further development of aggression and at eliminating an aggravated danger of a new world massacre.

"It is prepared immediately to take up in the League of Nations, or outside it, deliberation with other powers on practical measures that circumstances demand. Tomorrow may be too late, but today the time for it is not yet gone, if all States, and the great powers in particular take a firm and unambiguous stand on the problem of the collective salvation of peace."⁷

6. *New York Times*, August 8, 1937.

7. *New York Times*, March 18, 1938.

Though receiving no answer to this appeal from any government, the Soviet Union continued to work for international cooperation for peace, and it was one of those nations to reply to President Roosevelt's last-minute note during the Czechoslovakian crisis, urging that a joint appeal by all nations to Germany and Czechoslovakia might avert war. The Soviet government, acknowledging the gesture on the part of the American government, felt at that time that the convocation of a world conference would be the most effective measure to combat aggression.

The latest statement, paralleling the earlier pronouncements of American policy, was that of Secretary Hull at the opening of the Eighth International Conference of American States in Lima. He said in part:

"Our conference must carry forward the work of building an enduring structure of peace. It is within the power of the American nations to furnish a demonstration that peace, based on justice, law and cooperative effort, is unquestionably feasible. . . .

"Our conference must devote sincere effort to discovering the means of strengthening the foundations of international law. At a time when the structure of world order under law is being undermined and impaired in many parts of the globe, the very highest responsibility rests upon us to keep alive these fundamental principles of relations among nations upon which alone such order can be maintained.

"The right of each nation to manage its own affairs free from outside interference, recognition of the sovereignty and equality of states, irrespective of size and strength; respect for the pledged word and the sanctity of treaty obligations—these and numerous other basic principles must be the governing rules of international conduct if peace rather than anarchy is to prevail and civilization is to advance. . . .

"We of the Americas are fortunate beyond words in being so situated that we can make our example and our influence a potent factor in promotion of conditions in which there may be peace with justice and with security. Nor do we stand alone. There are in other parts of the world powerful forces, actual or latent, working toward the same end. . . ."⁸

In viewing the two countries in the current world scene where Soviet and American policy come into contact, the

8. *New York Times*, December 11, 1938.

Munich settlement found them in very similar positions — ignored, despite their evident readiness to be consulted and to cooperate in a “just” settlement. In the Far East, where the two nations form an arch dominating the Pacific Basin and furnishing the shortest route between continents, they see Japan encroaching on China, treading on American interests and threatening Soviet borders and they share, in common, “fisheries troubles” with Japan. When and if the United States feels need to take any regional international steps in the Pacific for the maintenance of peace, it will find there a nation whose record in regard to cooperation for world peace has been clearly consistent, a nation bound to China by a non-aggression pact which provides that no aid “direct or indirect” shall be given to any power attacking China—hence a nation rapidly cutting its trade with Japan to a minimum and in turn aiding China as far as possible in its struggle for independence.

Conclusions

That these similarities of geographical position and of international influence and attitude are recognized may be inferred from the fact that the Soviet Union was invited to the Brussels Conference, although it was not a signatory of the Washington Treaties, and from the fact that the Soviet Union was included in President Roosevelt’s appeal during the Czech crisis. That more real collaboration between the two countries in the international sphere has not taken place can perhaps be laid to various causes, but the realities of the present international situation completely overshadow these factors in importance. As it has become increasingly clear that the aggressive nations of today threaten peoples far beyond their frontiers and, further, that they have not been stopped by bilateral negotiation and concession, the nations and peoples, genuinely interested in the maintenance of peace, are coming to find no alternative open to them except international collaboration. Under these circumstances, one can look forward to closer relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, but it will be only through dispelling ignorance on the Soviet Union that prejudices can be forced to take their proper place in the formulation of American public opinion on so important a subject as the

organization for peace. This is what Secretary of State Hull terms "moral disarmament." His statement on this point to the Lima Conference could constructively be applied to Soviet-American relations:

"Our conference must carry forward the work of providing wider and stronger foundations for international cultural relations and better understanding between nations—again among ourselves, as well as between each of us and the rest of the world. This work of moral disarmament, already far advanced on the American continent, is indispensable for the creation and maintenance of a civilized world order under law. It is an important vehicle for strengthening and developing those innumerable international relationships in every phase of human activity through which the lives of nations have already been vastly enriched. . . ."⁹

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9. *New York Times*, December 11, 1938.

SOVIET COAL COMES OF AGE

By

ED FALKOWSKI

I

The character of the Soviet coal mining industry has been changing unmistakably in recent years. It is still, on the authority of the Moscow press, an industry limping slightly behind its quotas. On the other hand, its uphill climb is no longer erratic and incalculable. There are numerous signs that its growing-pains are nearing an end. Tonnages are being consolidated. Skill is being developed. Community problems are more adequately met.

These changes mark a far step from the years when the young Soviet government took over a war-ruined economy and mapped out a future in which modernized industry, agriculture, power and transport would be harnessed to raising average living and cultural standards beyond any known before. Among its immediate problems was that of coal, for years an economic "invalid," afflicted with a chronic anemia of capital, labor and initiative.

Under socialized control, the production of coal was resumed, a trickle at first, then swelling to greater volume. Gains in 21 years of Soviet operation may be illustrated best by comparing the 1938 output estimated at more than 137 million tons, anthracite and bituminous combined (exclusive of lignite and peat), with the 27 million ton pre-war peak of 1913, the 9.3 million ton output of 1921-22, and the 1934 record of 82.5 million tons.

Soviet coal now ranks third in the extent of reserves (1,200 billion tons, according to the All-Union Geological Survey).

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It is third also in extent of mine mechanization, and fourth in volume of output. The industry employs approximately 428,000 persons—20 per cent women—and produces 350,000 tons of coal a day, 214,000 tons of which comes from the Donets area of the Ukraine.

The Donets coal field continues to be the leading fuel base, but large scale expansion in other areas is now under way. Regional and local fuel self-sufficiency is one of the aims of the third Five-Year Plan. The Kuznets field in Western Siberia—now producing 12 million tons annually—is slated to be a “second Donets.” Developments are being pushed in the Karaganda fields of Kazakhstan, the Tkarchelli fields in the Caucasus, the Bureya, Minusinsk, Chulym-Yenisei and other important areas in Siberia as well as in the Sub-Moscow basin, south of Moscow, and the Borovichi fields close to Leningrad. Coal mining under Arctic conditions is carried on in the Pechora and the Spitsbergen fields. As a result of these operations in new areas, the share of Donets coal in the country’s fuel balance has dropped from 90 per cent of the total in 1913 to 62 per cent in 1932, and in 1937 dropped further to 52.5 per cent.

This progress can be understood only when viewed against the background of civil war and foreign intervention that practically paralyzed the industry, laid waste many of its communities and depleted its man power. From the spontaneous workers’ control committees which took over the operation of the collieries in this period to prevent their complete collapse there evolved the complex administrative structure of the Chief Administration of the Coal Industry (*Glavugol*) at Moscow which is under the supervision of the People’s Commissariat of Heavy Industry and to which the provincial and local coal administrations are responsible.

Shortly after the civil war the government launched its ambitious program to mechanize coal production as a first step toward industrial reconstruction. Mining machines, electric-powered haulageways, modern conveyors and ventilation systems found their way to the Donets pits to meet the labor dearth and to stimulate tonnage. Each mine soon spanned all

the evolving variants of mining technique from crow-bar to heavy cutting machine.

But the influx of village labor presented crucial problems. Thousands of newcomers to the industry had never beheld a modern machine. Age-old rural habits were introduced to the seams and gangways. Time schedules were meaningless to those whose clock had been the sun and the seasons. Only a subtle integration of industrial and training processes might solve this problem. The day's work became but the practical phase of lessons gained in the classroom by night. Foremen took on the duties of instructors. "Mastery of technique" was the watchword.

Russian mining from its beginnings had been notorious for long hours, lean wages, brutalizing toil. Peasants converged toward the pit-heads with the onset of winter but spring found them back at their plows. Exiles and convicts worked in private mines under guard to make up the lack.

Barrack habitations of smudged brick thrown up along the edges of the shaft areas, with company store, liquor dispensary and makeshift school, constituted the former mine community. Twenty-odd families were sometimes made to occupy a single dormitory with only the flimsy privacy of cloth hangings separating one family from another. All purchases were made at the company store with its dubious accounting. Scrip payment was customary with cash settlements semi-annually. No labor organization was permitted.

Production was phenomenally low, compared to that of the United States or other advanced industrial countries. Russian mine proprietors looked to their holdings as a source of personal income and assumed no obligation to improve or expand the industry. In 1913, St. Petersburg imported 8 million tons of English coal; during that year 150 million tons of wood were used for industrial and household fuel. Wood constituted 25.2 per cent of the total fuel supply in 1913 as against 9.6 per cent in 1937; the share of coal in the total fuel "balance" rose from 54.5 per cent in 1913 to 66.6 per cent in 1937.

Heritage and tradition left the Soviet mine manager no ready-made pattern of management. The desirability of a Taylor efficiency system clashed at countless points with the challenging realities of unskilled, undisciplined labor, a large labor turnover, uneven food supplies, and other problems that bear directly on plant efficiency.

II

The extent of these difficulties became clearer to me when in 1930 I found work in the Artem mine, an anthracite colliery of the North Caucasus Coal Trust, near Shakhti, on the south-east edge of the Donets Basin. There I was successively loader, repairman and Polish-German interpreter.

Artem had 5,000 workers and was trying with varying success to meet a schedule of 3,000 tons a day. Known for its thorough-going mechanization as a model mine, it had been, in the summer of 1930, behind its production plan. Stalled coal cutters, delayed haulage, cluttered conveyors and idling workers in various sections of the mine constituted no pleasant picture of contemporary efficiency.

One was tempted instinctively to view the situation in familiar American terms. Yankee mining men had paused here on their inspection rounds to advise improved labor discipline, closer supervision, better integration of technological processes, and the need of more skilled men. But trained men might be had only if the mine management undertook their training. A. A. Zvorikin, a Soviet fuel economist, in a valuable study of coal, estimated that of 9,000 men handling machines in North Caucasus mines in 1932 only 2,300 had had some prior knowledge of machinery.

A no less grave factor was the uncertain food supply, aggravated in 1930 by the temporary dislocations due to the collectivization program. Meat, butter, eggs and similar protein foods were unobtainable. Starch bulked large on the local bill-of-fare. Peasants from neighboring farms continued to cart produce to the weekly bazaar, but prices soared, while wages

retained old levels. No less disturbing was the housing situation. An elaborate scheme for re-housing the community had scarcely emerged from its blue-print chrysalis. Committees scoured the countryside for cement and brick. Wood shelters were hastily erected for the newcomers, but life in these temporary settlements had the air of a camp rather than of a permanent community.

Labor turnover in the Donets Basin, due to these and similar causes, reached 300 per cent of the total working force in 1930, according to an official estimate. Artem bore its share of the difficulties. Each week small groups of workers bundled up their effects and set their faces toward the open steppe once more. Others poured in from the outer world asking work and shelter.

Stabilized tonnage obviously meant stabilized community living. The management at first relied chiefly on its innermost core of veteran employes—about 15 per cent of the total force at Artem—whose loyalty to their industry was unshakeable. Hundreds of others pledged to remain until the emergency subsided. But the drift of the great mass continued to disarrange plans and reduce output.

The mine management endeavored to meet the situation on all fronts at once, as crisis succeeded crisis. A network of technical schools and demonstration points were set up to extend technical education to all. Miners on their way to work were urged to stop for a few minutes each day to study a cross-section of a drill or cutter. Technical aid bureaus responded to emergency calls. Inquests over damaged machines were called, and negligence was hailed before a comradely court—a provisional tribunal of workers—for trial. Culprits were reprimanded, sentenced to attend technical school, or demoted.

The village had brought its patriarchal conservatism to the mine. Peasant miners often clung to their hand-bars loyally, protesting the pneumatic pick and its vaunted tonnage. Now and then Luddite attitudes left a trail, crossed by a fainter trace of sabotage. The burnt-out motor, the melted bearings, the stalled air pump at times inspired uneasy wonder.

The mine management carried its perplexities before the public, summoning community meetings in the park or theater, at which the social implications of coal were heavily underscored in exhortation and song. Progress made by other industries was cited encouragingly in hopes of reviving local tonnage. Beyond the immediate issues of housing and diet, loomed the momentous one of workers' capacity for governing industry. Humdrum acquiescence to sub-plan routines meant capitulation to rising obstacles. There existed no superior in command to issue orders, to use coercion; the men must themselves resolve to conquer the existing difficulties and deal with the "coal front" as years before they had dealt with the enemy on the field.

High-tonnage miners and others with exemplary efficiency ratings were known as shock workers. Their exertions won recognition in premiums, awards and communal acclaim. Groups and individuals challenged to socialist competition; signed contracts; named penalties; undertook to render mutual aid. The resources of local publicity—newspaper, radio, theater—were used to dramatize output. Hourly announcements on public boards informed the world how each sector was doing. Tonnage-heroes told over a local network how it could be done. Housewives encouraged their spouses with culinary feats, and there were instances when wives refused to prepare their husbands' meal when they had failed to fulfill their plan.

The community learned to watch closely every trend at the mine. An unexpected spurt caused elation; brought a band of musicians to the shaft; sailed floral bouquets at the sweaty conquerors as they stepped from the hoisted cage and made for the wash-house. Under-plan production on the other hand cast a deep shadow. Appetites sank; amusements failed to amuse.

Harnessing material to spiritual incentives, the trade union and management honored the champion workers with special food rations, better housing (when available), free passes to rest homes and sanatoriums. They were elected to the township council, the school board and other public committees. Every effort was made to use each technical gain as a means to spur other mines forward as well. "Tug brigades" were formed

by the outstanding miners, who sometimes visited distant operations to demonstrate efficient work. The air was brisk with challenge, each mine struggling for position or prestige. Artem, long in the lead, saw a strong rival in the new O.G.P.U. mine at Shakhti, with a daily capacity of 5,000 tons, and mechanized throughout.

The aroused community evinced increasing desire to aid the mine in its production plan. On "industrialization day" at Artem the entire community—men and women, led by brass bands—marched to the shaft to be hoisted into the mine for six hours of volunteer labor in a collective effort to salvage the plan. Such free-day affairs usually ended with a feast at which the shaft management acknowledged the civic gesture.

No less important in the reorganization of the mine was "self-criticism"—each man's right to speak outrightly and frankly of the shortcomings of the mine. Not even the director was immune from the unsparing candor with which coal diggers discussed inadequacies of management or method at the periodical production councils.

The miners' union maintained a grievance committee. Serious charges were sometimes referred to higher public bodies. The Miners' Union, the Communist Party and the management were welded in a common determination to uproot defects, improve conditions, bring about a reign of efficiency. They looked to the initiative of the workers for their greatest aid. Hewer, timberman, switch tender, slate picker were urged to evaluate methods, to propose changes, to unmask laggards and to lash out at bureaucracy unmercifully. They were asked to view the mine problems as problems common to all, since the workers and the union, the Party and the management constituted but one social group, working toward a common aim of socialist abundance and cultured life for all.

Bureaucracy—the dry-rot of indifferent management—constituted a serious obstacle to uninterrupted progress. Machinery greatly reduced the numbers working at the coal face while adding substantially to the supervisory and the administrative personnel. According to Zvorikin, of 252,000 employed in the Donets in 1932 only 36,100—13.1 per cent—were actually en-

gaged in mining coal. The remainder represented auxiliary underground and surface personnel, the clerical and administrative staffs. The proportion of surface workers in the Donets was 29 per cent of the total against 21 per cent in the Ruhr and 13.5 per cent in the United States.

Production in 1932 totalled 43.8 million tons, averaging five tons per man-day for coal-face miners but pinching down to .67 tons per man-day for the industry as a whole (against 1.7 tons per man-day for the entire industry in the Ruhr; 4.7 tons in the United States. Consideration must be given here, however, to the smaller thickness of Donets seams and the six-hour day at the coal face).

Top-heavy administration was too unwieldy for the brisk demands of a fast-changing situation. Directors ensnarled in reports lacked time to inspect their operations more than two or three times a month. Engineers often toyed with elaborate production schemes while the day's output at their mine was failing. The subdivision of authority into micro-metric lengths—a carryover from pre-war routines—made quick decision all but impossible. In many mines the management resigned itself to so-called "paper" methods of administration whereby the signaturing of a series of official orders by the director was presumed to possess the value of spot supervision and guidance. The production council and direct contact with the men on the job were often ignored.

Red tape, uncertainty, delay and failure to meet the plan were a consequence of this "formalistic" approach to management. Flat wages were paid for unequal work where differentials might stimulate greater effort. Low production was often accepted as unavoidable. Housing projects gathered dust; half-hearted improvements in food supply and flow of consumers' goods did not meet community need. Little was done to transform willing enthusiasm into something more lasting than the showmanship of individual output.

This placid sway received a staggering blow in the government decree of April 8, 1933, calling for a reorganization of the coal industry in the Donets. Overhead staffs were to be

greatly reduced. Upward wage scale revisions would provide substantial differentials for production above the norm. Norms were to be fixed by a technical bureau, in conjunction with the union and the management.

Mine areas, furthermore, were to receive preference in the flow of food and manufactured goods from the centers. Rejuvenated building departments surprised their communities with supplies of brick and cement. Clubs and restaurants were erected. Miners with families were allotted truck-gardens; 50,000 pigs were distributed or sold on easy credits to help the winter meat supply.

Late in 1933, Nicholas Izotov, a hewer at the Kochegarka mine, Gorlovka, scored 2,000 per cent of his norm fulfillment in a single day, setting an unprecedented record. His fame grew overnight. He attributed his achievement to a thorough knowledge of his pneumatic pick. Interest in technical education took on a fresh lease of life. State technical examinations were inaugurated to test ability and knowledge. Honor badges were awarded the meritorious, as well as gifts of clothing, excursion tickets, theater passes.

Izotov taught hewers in his seam, and in the evenings, explained his method at the club: wrote primers and texts to meet inpouring requests. The Izotov movement assumed Union-wide proportions, those scoring several norms a day being known as "Izotovites" and "masters of socialist labor." Emphasis was on individual performance. It was the individual, challenging routine, who set a fresh pace, and the rest, following, would bring about peak productivity which meant, in turn, general prosperity and comfort.

Norms tended to stiffen and plans became more exacting with each stage in the development of efficiency. Izotov blazed the trail for the following step. When Alexei Stakhanov on August 30, 1935, smashed previous production records, cutting 102 tons in 5 hours 45 minutes with a pneumatic pick in the Central Irmino mine, Gorlovka, his achievement was not only a matter of mental and muscular proficiency: he had organized the group-basis of his work. Division and specialization of

labor were seen as the logical next stage. He found that five hewers and as many timbermen, specialized strictly in their tasks, could replace 23 men formerly employed in the same vein. Hewers' monthly earnings rose from 600 to 1,600 rubles. Timbermen made over 1,000 rubles monthly. Stakhanovism heralded new production and living standards.¹ Unique individual achievements, it was pointed out, were valuable, but more to be desired was a rise in average productivity for the industry as a whole.

The efficiency crusade spread with wildfire rapidity from coal to other industries. Production costs were being lopped. Output was being boosted. In 1936 alone, 30,000 Donets miners doubled or trebled their day's norms; 80,000 others rated as shock workers with norm fulfillments of 120 to 200 per cent. The industry was readjusting itself to the potentialities of its modernized technique.

This transition coincided with real improvements in other fields. An improved agricultural situation increased the flow of products; ration cards disappeared; stores re-opened with amply filled shelves. Clothing, furniture and other commodities were obtainable. Stucco-fronted buildings defined the rudimentary streets of future settlements and towns. Movies, trolleys, creches, hospitals, libraries, schools, clubs and theaters brought fresh life to the coal lands.

III

This growth of stabilization was the outstanding impression gained on my last visit to Artem in 1936. The community was no longer shaken with uncertainties. Contingents of capable men now met schedules with business-like dispatch. The local

1. The following statement on current wages for the Donets miners, by N. Gvozdyrkow, director of Kirov Mine N. 22/6, and deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, appeared in *The Moscow News*, October 31, 1938:

"Last year the average monthly earnings of a worker in our mine amounted to 352 rubles while now it is 446.69 rubles. The earnings of miners at the coal face have increased from 384.19 rubles last year to 546.78 at present. The average monthly earnings of a foreman amount to 1,006 rubles.

"The earnings of the leading professions reveal the following picture: a coal cutting machine operator earns an average of 43.93 rubles a day; a driver of an electric locomotive—25.87 rubles; a worker at the coal face—33.08; a propper—29.11. More than 1,000 rubles a month are regularly earned by between 250 and 300 of the workers. . . . Nearly 1,000 were accommodated in rest homes and at health resorts this year."

citizens accepted their assignment: to provide the government with 3,000 tons of coal each day.

No one was worried about food. A series of new dwellings stretched from the former barracks, to form the nucleus of the "socialist city." A new power plant droned from across the low hummocks to the east. Beyond it lay the red structures and the ground-imbedded pipelines of a new experimental station for underground combustion of coal, presaging a new era in coal utilization.

One discovered a similar spirit in the Sub-Moscow and other fields. This outward calm did not, however, disguise the intensive battles of schedules and tonnages being waged below. One followed the advances and retreats of the various sectors, noted with military brevity on the public bulletin boards.

This struggle was moving forward, however, in terms of higher efficiency. The Donets seams alone had 2,000 coal cutting machines. Stakhanovized sections passed on their enthusiasm to other parts of the mine in a demand to "stakhanovize" entire operations, a task programmed for 1939, with rigid unit-fulfillment of the day's plan as the objective. Cyclical cutting operations—taking out one slice of coal along the entire length of seam in a single shift²—are further standardizing output and putting a "floor" under plan fulfillment. The group of plan-fulfillment units in the Donets increased from 62 to 80 with the past year.

Concurrently, efforts to eradicate "formalism" from management have not abated. Stabilization of communal life and growth in numbers of trained miners makes the continuance of bureaucracy and its outmoded methods increasingly untenable. Nor do "subjective" factors play as vital a role as in previous years.

Production in 1937 was 26.3 tons per man per month for the industry as a whole as against 13.8 tons per man per month in 1932. Costs during this period fell by 32.4 per cent. Mechanization has been extended to 93 per cent of the cutting, 80 per cent of the haulage, 20 per cent of the loading, and 60 per cent of

2. This is what is called "long-wall" work in England. In the United States, with few exceptions, this method is not used. Here it is "short-wall" or "chamber" work.

the surface operations. Electrical equipment is replacing pneumatic. To further coordinate mechanized operation, the third Five-Year Plan envisages an extension of auxiliary machine shops for making spare parts and facilitating timely repairs. The coal-producing "factory," operating flawlessly from seam to railroad truck, is the goal.

In its brief history Soviet coal has retraced all the periods in mining development from hand-bar to ultra-modern methods. Its development has been uneven but beneath the fluctuating curve has formed a solid substructure of permanent improvement. Conservatism has been successfully fought. Furthermore, the initiative latent in the common man has been awakened and encouraged, lending creative zest to industrial effort. Workers have been constantly encouraged to a fuller awareness of their free status in a democratized industry, through active participation in solving its many problems and in advancing it on the road to progress.

Through their union, the miners negotiate annual contracts; supervise an elaborate social insurance system that provides for aid in case of illness, accident or death; and cooperate to secure greater efficiency and safety on the job. Miners live in rent-free houses, and are provided coal and electricity without cost. Medical treatment is free and most of the club programs are open to everyone without charge.

Perhaps few will claim that mining can ever be anything but a physically arduous occupation, even with modern machinery. In the Soviet pattern, however, underlying social forces will use the cumulative efforts of miners, as of all other producing groups, as an economic springboard to quicken the realization of the "good" life toward which the socialist sixth of the world is moving.

THE SOVIET UNION AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

B.

JOHN S. CURTISS

The fall of the Spanish monarchy in 1931 took Moscow completely by surprise. In spite of the prophecy of Lenin that Spain would be the next country after Russia to be the scene of revolutionary events, and in spite of a realization that the throne of Alfonso was shaky, in 1931 the Soviet Union was far too busy to speculate on an upheaval south of the Pyrenees. Consequently, when the monarchy was brought to an end in the municipal elections of April, 1931, Walter Duranty reported that "*Pravda's* first reaction was a dismal editorial, stale as a damp squib." According to the *New York Times* correspondent, the USSR was too occupied at home to welcome possible complications in a new area. For some time after the fall of Alfonso, the USSR had little more interest in Spain than it had had during the monarchy. However, with the elections in November, 1933, and the ensuing reaction, leading to the uprisings in Catalonia, Madrid, and Asturias in October, 1934, attention in Moscow was again aroused. Detailed accounts of the fighting were given by the Soviet press, with special emphasis on the heroism of the proletariat and the brutality of the military in suppressing the uprising.

The elections of February, 1936, did not bring much further change in the Soviet attitude on Spain. Indeed, *Pravda*, in its editorial of February 19, 1936, rejoiced, not because of any imagined triumph of Communism, but because Syndicalists, Anarchists, Socialists, Communists, and Left Republicans had united to defeat fascism. Moreover, after the excitement attending the elections had passed, the Moscow newspapers paid little attention to the Spanish situation. Only on May 7 did

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Pravda abandon its consideration of China, the disorders in Poland, and the Popular Front in France to print an editorial, "What is happening in Spain"; and in this it pointed out the dangers of a fascist reaction—the strength of the reactionary elements in the army, the Guardia Civil, the civil service, banking, manufacturing, landholding, the Church, and the divisions in the ranks of the Left, as well as the failure to clip the claws of Generals Franco and Goded.

With that word of warning *Pravda* turned to consider more pressing matters; nothing more was printed on the Spanish situation until July 18, 1936—the eve of the Fascist uprising. Even at this late date the situation did not appear serious. Although the terrorism of the Fascist Falange and the retaliation of the Assault Guards in killing Calvo Sotelo were duly chronicled, there was little indication that civil war was about to begin. On the 19th there were brief reports from British and French sources of an uprising in Morocco, and from that time on Spain was never absent from the pages of the Soviet newspapers. However, even as late as July 23 the Spanish news seemed hopeful—on that date *Pravda* printed an editorial analyzing the Spanish uprising, which was stated to be an affair of reactionary officers, backed by the Foreign Legion and the Navarrese, against the people of Spain, aided by the rank and file of the army and navy. Moreover, this was printed on an inside page; apparently the Soviet journalists did not recognize the seriousness of the Spanish imbroglio.

Beginning with July 25, however, the international complications of the Spanish uprising began to be noticed. From that time on the Soviet press called attention to the arrival of Italian and German warships in Spanish waters, to the supplying of planes to the rebels by the fascist powers, and to the furious campaign of the German press to enlist the nations of Europe in a crusade to ward off the impending "victory of Bolshevism in Spain." British and French newspapers were drawn on liberally to show the growing intervention of the fascist powers in the conflict—a landing party put ashore by the cruiser *Deutschland*, the reports of Genevieve Tabouis and Pertinax concerning German and Italian machinations in Morocco, the

continued movement of war planes to rebel Spain, and the action of a German warship in preventing the bombardment of rebel Ceuta by the loyalist fleet. Finally, on August 3, Soviet wrath boiled over. A great meeting was held in the Red Square in Moscow, at which 120,000 people were present; noted speakers condemned the Fascist intervention in Spain, and solidarity with the Spanish people was expressed by those present. Similar meetings were held in other cities of the Union; in its issue of August 5, *Pravda* devoted the first two and a half pages to the meetings and the Spanish situation. On August 6 it was reported that 12,145,000 rubles had been donated for aid to Spanish women and children.

The people of the USSR were not the only ones to be disturbed by Fascist intervention in Spain; France in particular was upset by the possibility of being drawn into a general European war arising out of the Spanish conflict. Consequently, Leon Blum had ordered the French frontier closed to munitions for Spain early in August and had urged the other powers to refrain from shipping munitions to either side. However, this failed to produce the desired result. The Fascist powers continued to send munitions, and the Portuguese port of Lisbon proved to be a ready means of avoiding loyalist efforts to stop this practice. At the same time Italian and German planes continued to make their way to rebel Morocco. Once more France made earnest efforts to prevent the Spanish war from spreading. Late in August, after negotiations with Britain, France and her ally sent notes to all the European nations, asking them to pledge themselves to refrain from sending munitions to Spain, and to aid in the formation of a Non-Intervention Committee to devise means to aid in the maintenance of neutrality. One of the nations so approached was the Soviet Union; the Russians agreed to the principle of non-intervention, and the Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain, Maisky, became a member of Lord Plymouth's committee. However, the acceptance of the USSR was grudging, as it was felt that it was a great concession to sacrifice the recognized right to send munitions to an established, legal government. Moreover, not for a moment did the Soviet authorities put trust in the pledges of the fascist powers. The authorities of the Kremlin knew

that there was little reason to expect honorable fulfillment from Hitler and Mussolini; but, due to the pressure of France and Britain, they signed the agreement, fully prepared for the worst.

The gloomy forebodings of the Soviet authorities were soon realized. Reports of fascist intervention continued to pour forth upon the pages of the Soviet newspapers; the evidence was taken from the leading papers of Europe and the United States, so that it exercised a powerful effect upon the people of the USSR. On September 12, 1936, *Pravda* printed on page 1 a letter from the women of a Moscow factory, accompanying their donation of fifty rubles for the women and children of Spain. Many similar communications followed, and on September 22, under a headline, "We are with you, sons and daughters of the Spanish people!" an article told of the sympathy of the Soviet citizens for those of Spain, which was given tangible form by the contribution of seven million rubles since the previous donation. On September 25 a meeting of 100,000 people took place in the Dynamo Stadium in Moscow; a resolution of sympathy with the Spaniards was adopted, and a pledge was made that more funds would be furnished for the sufferers in the civil war. Other meetings of sympathy with Spain took place in Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov, and other centers, and on September 27 the Soviet steamer *Neva* arrived in Alicante with a cargo of provisions for "the heroic Spanish people." *Pravda* printed an article entitled, "Aid for the Spanish people is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Soviet Union." So strongly had sympathy with the unfortunate Spaniards penetrated the people of Soviet Russia that small children fired by dreams of great things now chose Spain as their field of action, instead of the Moscow subway or the Dneprostroy Dam; their mothers found notes saying, "Dear Mama: I'm on my way to Spain, where we shall win; then I'll come back a hero."

However, heroism alone was not enough to save Spain. On October 1, *Pravda* printed information taken from reliable British and French newspapers stating that Germany and Italy had sent 320 planes to the rebels—Junkers, Heinkels, Savoias,

Fiats, and Capronis—which gave them air superiority of five to one on the Madrid front. Nor was that all. With tanks, artillery, and other supplies furnished by the fascist powers Franco pushed the forces of loyalist Spain steadily back, inexorably nearer to Madrid. In vain did Litvinov urge that the League should adopt a positive policy to check the aggressors; the Assembly took no action. On October 7 Kagan, Soviet Ambassador, handed Lord Plymouth a note denouncing the interventionist activity of Italy and Germany through Portugal, and warning that the USSR could not permit “non-intervention” to be a shield covering war aid to the rebels. The Soviet Union declared that “if the violations of the non-intervention agreement are not immediately ended, it will consider itself free from the obligations imposed by the agreement.” But this demand produced no improvement in the position of the Spanish loyalists.

In the meantime, opinion in the Soviet Union was becoming strongly aroused. On October 11 *Pravda* in an editorial urged, “Put an end to the intervention in Spain,” demanding immediate steps to rectify the situation. On the 12th the title was, “The fascist farce of non-intervention”; on the 14th, “The proofs against the interventionists mount.” On the following day the resolution of a group of Moscow workers was prominently displayed: “We demand either an end to the intervention of the fascists or the right of the Spanish people to buy arms.” This feeling led to new demarches before the Non-Intervention Committee. On October 15 the Soviet representative demanded that the navies of Britain and France should take measures to prevent the flow of arms through Portugal. However, Lord Plymouth refused on technical grounds to take up the proposal; whereupon *Pravda* denounced his ruling. In heavy type it declared, “The government of the USSR under no circumstances will tolerate the perversion of the Non-Intervention Agreement into a tool for aiding the Spanish rebels. The people of the USSR are fully on the side of the legal Spanish government, which is defending the rights and the freedom of the Spanish people.” Moreover, Stalin, in response to a telegram of the Communist Party in Spain, replied, “The workers of the Soviet Union are only performing their duty

when they give all possible aid to the revolutionary masses of Spain. They realize that the liberation of Spain from the oppression of fascist reactionaries is not the private concern of the Spaniards, but the common duty of all advanced and progressive humanity." Furthermore, a number of popular resolutions, letters, and other expressions of opinion showed that the USSR would no longer be bound by the agreement, and *Pravda's* editorial of October 19 stated, "The peoples of the Soviet Union unanimously support the declaration of their government." On the 24th another editorial stated, "As for the government of the USSR, it goes without saying that it cannot have other obligations in non-intervention than those which are actually fulfilled by the other parties to the agreement."¹

By this time the rebel forces were close to the gates of Madrid; apparently only a miracle could balk General Franco's army with its Moors, Italian tanks, and German and Italian airplanes and artillery. However, the miracle occurred. In spite of the predictions of professional military men the world over, the loyalist forces made a desperate stand and beat off the rebel attempts. Judging by reports of American and British newspaper men, Russian munitions played a part in that stand; early in November, nearly four months after the beginning of the rebellion—so the reports stated—Russian airplanes, tanks, and artillery were supplied to the loyalist forces, thus partially redressing the inequality of equipment which had been so marked from the beginning of the civil war.² Perhaps some Russian pilots, tank drivers, and gunners also made their appearance, although the evidence is scanty on this subject, and the Soviet government denied that any Soviet soldiers had gone to Spain. Certain it is that if Soviet warriors did go to

1. The editorial referred to the statement made by Ambassador Maisky to the Non-Intervention Committee, on Oct. 23, reading in part: "Having accepted the agreement on non-intervention, the government of the Soviet Union expected this agreement would be fulfilled by all participants, and that in consequence the length of the civil war in Spain, as well as the number of its victims, would be reduced.

"It has been shown, however, that this agreement is being systematically violated by several participants. The insurgents are being supplied with arms with impunity. . . .

"The Soviet government does not desire any longer to hold itself responsible for the present position, which is obviously unfair to the legal Spanish government and population, and hereby is compelled to declare that pursuant to its declaration of October 7, it cannot consider itself bound by the non-intervention agreement to any greater extent than the remaining participants in this agreement."

2. A *New York Times* dispatch of April 6, 1937, describes how the Loyalists won supremacy in the air late in November, 1936, due to the receipt of Soviet planes.

Spain they were few in numbers; no foreign observers ever saw Soviet troops marching through Spanish cities, although many newspaper correspondents testified to the presence of large numbers of Italian and German troops. Moreover, the Soviet press never claimed that the victories of the loyalists, at Madrid, Guadalajara, Teruel, or at Gandesa, were anything but victories of the Spaniards themselves—in marked contrast to Italian boasting after the capture of Irun, Bilbao, Malaga, and Tortosa.

However, the stopping of Franco outside Madrid did not end the problems of the Spanish civil war; if anything, it led to a host of new problems. The fascist powers once more poured men and equipment into Spain in increased amounts; the pages of the Soviet papers, like those of other countries, were filled with articles proclaiming the coming of new bodies of Italian soldiers, new German tanks, planes, and infantry, and the other paraphernalia of war in increasing quantities. Nor did the Non-Intervention Committee do anything to remedy the situation; Lord Plymouth applied the whitewash brush freely to both sides, and the problem of intervention remained unsettled. Moreover, a new problem appeared on the sea. As has so often happened in this conflict, when the rebels were balked on land they turned to the sea in order to strike at their enemies. In November, the rebel navy stopped nine Soviet steamers and detained them in Ceuta. According to Soviet authorities, these vessels were going through the Straits of Gibraltar with non-contraband, bound for neutral countries; consequently considerable indignation was expressed over the seizures. However, feeling over the action of the rebels reached its height in December, 1936, when the steamer *Komsomol*, carrying a cargo of manganese ore to Ghent, Belgium, was stopped and burned by the rebel cruiser *Canarias*; the fate of the crew remained unknown. Great was the indignation in the Soviet Union when these facts were learned; giant mass-meetings were held to protest against the "piracy" of the rebels, and vows of vengeance were taken. No punitive action was taken, however, and the whole matter was allowed to lapse. This moderation was especially striking when compared to the

German action when the ship *Palos* was seized by the Basques, with a cargo of munitions for the rebels; the *Deutschland* at once retaliated by seizing two loyalist vessels, which were turned over to the rebel authorities.

In the meantime the Non-Intervention Committee was doing little to remedy matters. On December 10, a joint note was sent to the powers by Britain and France, deploring the dangers arising out of the Spanish war and urging the adoption of real control over Spanish ports. To this Litvinov answered with an acceptance in principle, conditioned on the readiness of the other powers involved to make similar concessions. *Pravda* followed this pronouncement with a featured editorial, "The position of the Soviet Union is clear." It declared that the USSR stood sincerely for peace, which could have been secured within a few days if the Spanish rebels had not received arms. The Non-Intervention agreement did not further the cause of peace, but did it harm, for under cover Germany and Italy helped Franco with impunity; their recognition of the Franco regime was a clear indication that they were planning more, and not less, intervention. Hence the proposals of the French and British for mediation or a plebiscite in Spain did not take into account the realities of the situation. The only way to secure peace was to take a strong stand against the aggressor nations. In *Izvestia* the official commentator, Vigilis, expressed disgust over the notes of the two democracies; only a strong stand, backed by the knowledge that energetic collective action would follow, would suffice to check the aggressors. On January 9 and 10 the same spokesman warned of German infiltration into Morocco and Spain—a course ostensibly directed against "communist influence," but in reality a most dangerous advance against the essential interests of England and France.

After the repeated urging of the Soviet authorities that a strong stand be taken against the fascist intervention, it was gratifying for them to observe the adoption of their formula by Britain and France in the joint naval demonstration off Spanish Morocco in January, 1937. As had been predicted, this display of force did not provoke a war, but instead led to hasty dis-

claimers of dangerous intentions by the Germans. However, after this triumph the two western democracies quickly returned to their old ways. On January 18 Vigilis objected strongly to the ban on volunteers by the British and the French when there was nothing to stop the fascist powers from sending in whole brigades for the rebels. On February 12, after the capture of Malaga by the rebel and Italian forces, he warned that a fascist victory in Spain would bring war nearer, for the fascist powers could then attack France from three sides and block the trade communications of Britain.

The workings of the Non-Intervention Commission did not prove any more satisfactory to the Soviet government after the Anglo-French demonstration than they had before. In an editorial of February 15, 1937, *Izvestia* declared, "The shameful comedy continues," for the non-intervention system permitted the powers supporting General Franco to send in great numbers of men and munitions in vast quantities, while the loyalists were deprived of arms by the closing of the French border. Moreover, the proposal for establishing "control" of Spanish ports and frontiers by neutral observers and war vessels was repeatedly sabotaged by the objections of the fascist powers; *Izvestia* on February 28 pointed out that this delay, including the prevention of control of the Portuguese border, was permitting the pro-rebel powers to pour men and supplies into Spain. In fact, the newspaper stated, the delay was calculated to ensure that the rebels would be provided with sufficient munitions to win the war. As the world knows, that development was averted in March, 1937, at Guadalajara; however, that defeat failed to stop fascist intervention. In fact, as Vigilis pointed out, Grandi's declaration that not a single Italian would be withdrawn from Spain until Franco had won, showed that Italy was about to intensify her activity in the war—which would be a grave danger for Europe, unless Britain and France took a firm stand to check such aggression. And even as late as April 10 it was pointed out that the failure to establish strict control over importations into Spain was playing into the hands of the rebels and their friends. He characterized the British hopes of buying off a victorious Franco by means of

loans as fatuous, for Italy and Germany would not give up the fruits of victory, which had already cost them dear.

On April 14, an editorial in *Izvestia* analyzed the general results of the Spanish war to date in some detail. It reminded the world that the government in Spain when the war began was the legally elected government, the choice of the Spanish people; moreover, it had contained no Communists and no Socialists. Hence, the pretext of the fascists that they were saving Spain from "communism" had no basis. Actually the intervention of Italy and Germany was merely part of the general campaign of aggression which began in Manchuria in 1931; by their failure to act accordingly, France and Britain were destroying their own prestige. Already fascist planes had dared to bomb French soil, and the British, by acquiescing in the blockade of Bilbao, had also lost face. This weak policy in Spain, said the editorial, would affect the course of events in China, in Palestine, and in central Europe, for the appetite of the aggressors increased with each success.

However, at long last the international patrol of Spain's coasts and frontiers was begun; it went into effect on April 19, 1937. Nevertheless, the Soviet authorities were far from satisfied with this step; on the 22nd *Vigilis* complained that the British government was not sincere in refusing to allow British ships to enter Bilbao, for the dangers from mines were only imaginary. Hence, His Majesty's Government was actually helping Franco. And on April 26, under the heading, "The Fascist intervention continues," this writer listed the landings of fresh German and Italian troops, and with bitterness pointed to the openness of the Portuguese border and the general failure of "control." His conclusion was that the ruling classes in Britain wanted Franco to win. However, great as was Soviet disgust at this time, it was far surpassed by the bitterness occasioned by the *Deutschland* incident and the resulting bombardment of Almeria.

Izvestia described the *Deutschland* incident under the caption, "Playing with fire." The German warship, it said, was in the harbor of Iviza, which was outside the sector allotted to the

German navy in the international patrol; moreover, the ship did not need to go there for supplies, as its temporary base was in Algeria. Iviza had been bombed by loyalist planes; the *Deutschland* had opened fire on the planes, which retaliated with bombs, killing several German sailors. Two days later a large German fleet had steamed into the loyalist port of Almeria, and had opened fire without warning; in the systematic bombardment a number of peaceful inhabitants had been killed. This was termed "a tragic result of the policy of mildness to aggressors," and grave danger of large scale war was seen, if England and France failed to take a strong stand. War was averted in this case; but later in June the German cruiser *Leipzig* reported that it had been hit by a torpedo, and again Germany threatened war. Vigilis once more warned that Britain's political leaders should learn from this incident that a policy of concessions only leads to new aggression.

The chief reason given by Italy and Germany for their meddling in Spanish affairs was the alleged danger of the formation of a Communist state under Russian guidance. Actually this danger has appeared at all times to be remote; the Communists were and are too few in numbers to gain control. However, it cannot be denied that the Soviet Union has had considerable influence in loyalist Spain. The USSR has been the only firm friend of the Madrid government, and has sent supplies of munitions⁴ and food when other powers were imposing an embargo; hence it is only natural that Soviet influence has increased. Thus, when the government of Largo Caballero failed to mobilize the nation's resources for the war,

4. A *New York Times* despatch of April 22, 1937, describes the extent of Russian military aid at that time. It reads in part:

" . . . Perhaps a clear conception of the foreign role in Loyalist Spain can be gleaned from a description of these brigades in action. In the first place, there are no Russian infantrymen among them. . . .

"It is when one goes above the ordinary soldier that the full importance of Russian aid is realized. Except for a small number of light Renaults that the government had from the beginning, all the tanks are Russian. The original crews also were Russian. The government's policy in every case is ultimately to supplant all foreign manpower by Spaniards, and as the militiamen have become properly trained the tanks have been turned over to them, so that now perhaps 50 per cent have Spanish crews. At the same time the tactics and staff leadership still are Russian.

"Artillery has always been a weak point on the government side. What there is of it, the writer believes, although he is not sure, has been purchased from Russia and is largely directed by Russian and French officers. . . .

" . . . The conclusions to be drawn may be briefly summed up. No foreign country has played an important role on the government side except Russia, whose intervention has been enormously effective. Its effectiveness, however, has been qualitative rather than quantitative. At least nine-tenths of those who are fighting and dying in Loyalist Spain are Spaniards."

Soviet criticism intensified the growing dissatisfaction; and when he failed to deal out drastic punishment to the leaders of the P.O.U.M.⁵ for their part in the Barcelona uprising in May, 1937, (in which 900 were killed, and 2,500 wounded) Communist pressure helped to bring about the fall of Largo Caballero and the formation of the Negrin government. However, this fact cannot be considered proof that Spain is becoming a Soviet state, for the government of Negrin is chiefly in the hands of the Left Republicans, although a few Communists and Socialists were included, and although the Soviet press welcomed it warmly. Undoubtedly, if Leon Blum's government had given firm support to the loyalists, French influence would have been even stronger in Spain than is that of the Soviet Union.

With the establishment of the Negrin government, the Soviet press ceased to take an active interest in Spanish internal politics; however, in the late summer of 1937 a new crisis appeared over the horizon: "unidentified submarines" began to sink British and other vessels in the Mediterranean. Like the general public abroad, the Soviet citizens were convinced this was the work of the Italian navy; indeed, an article in *Izvestia*, "Jungles in the Mediterranean Sea," stated flatly that this was an Italian attempt, not merely to aid Franco, but even to gain control of "Mare Nostrum." The writer went on to say that if the British carried out their threat to sink pirate submarines, all would be well; but he did not fail to insist that if the British government had not shown such weakness in the past, matters never would have reached the danger point.

The sinkings continued, however. Not only were British and French vessels attacked; on August 20 and September 1 two Soviet steamers, the *Timiriachev* and *Blagoev*, were torpedoed, one near Algiers, the other in the Aegean Sea. At once a storm of protest arose in the USSR. Indignant resolutions were adopted by meetings of factory workers, and many noted individuals wrote letters demanding action. Already in England and France there was a strong feeling that positive action must

5. P.O.U.M. stands for Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (Marxist Unification Workers Party).

be taken; the threat of Soviet measures perhaps helped this feeling to crystallize into action. On September 5, the conference at Nyon was called, in spite of Soviet suggestions that the League of Nations handle the problem. Nyon was chosen so that Italy and Germany might escape the necessity of going to Geneva; however, they did not go to Nyon, for on the eve of the conference, the USSR sent a stiff note to Italy, accusing her of the sinkings, and demanding full accountability. This note stirred Italy and Germany to fury, and they withdrew from the proposed conference. From the Soviet point of view this was no great loss; without the legalistic delays and sabotage so characteristic of the fascist maneuvers in the Non-Intervention Committee, the conference at Nyon soon adopted positive measures,⁶ in which the USSR shared, against the piratical submarines of "the unknown power," and shortly thereafter the sinkings stopped.

The formation of the Nyon Conference, and the strong measures resulting from it, was a great triumph for the Soviet diplomats. For years they had been urging action of this sort as a means of averting war; now their prescription had been tried, with the very result which had been prophesied. However, while an editorial in *Izvestia* rejoiced in this fact, it did not express complete satisfaction. For one thing, the legal Spanish government was not represented at the conference, although it was certainly an interested party; moreover, the conference was only a first step in the direction of real collective security. Indeed, much of the savor of the triumph was lost when France and Britain shortly afterward reverted to their old policy of conciliation and, with the other members of the League, refused to accept Litvinov's suggestion for a strong resolution in behalf of the loyalist government.

In retrospect, the Nyon agreement appears to have been a victory for the policy of collective security; but it was certainly not the inception of a new, determined policy, on the part of

6. The Nyon Anti-Piracy Accord, signed Sept. 14, 1937, provided that "Any submarine which attacks such a ship in any manner contrary to the rules of international law referred to in the international treaty for the limitation and reduction of naval armaments signed in London, April 22, 1930, and confirmed in a protocol signed in London, Nov. 6, 1936, shall be counter-attacked and, if possible, destroyed. . . ." The French and British fleets were to patrol the Mediterranean and other powers could patrol their territorial waters.

England and France. Quite the contrary. In October, 1937, Britain and France asked Italy to confer on the subject of withdrawing volunteers, and the recognition of belligerent rights for General Franco. The two democracies even went so far as to accept the proposal for partial "symbolic" withdrawal of Italian troops, to be followed immediately by the granting of belligerent rights. Coming on top of Mussolini's announcement, on October 5, that new Italian units had been sent to Spain, and that a squadron of twenty-three bombers, one of them manned by Bruno Mussolini, had been formed to operate from the island of Majorca, this proposal was too much for Soviet opinion. On October 18, Vigilis denounced the scheme for the "symbolic" evacuation of foreign troops, and the granting of belligerent rights to the rebels. Only real and total evacuation, he insisted, would be sufficient. This was the attitude which the Soviet representative took before the Non-Intervention Committee on October 19 and 23; he informed Lord Plymouth that the USSR would consent to grant belligerent rights to the rebels only when all non-Spaniards had been evacuated from Spain, together with their artillery, tanks, and aviation.

For the moment the question of evacuating the "volunteers" was dropped. None the less, Soviet Russia felt an ever greater need to be on her guard against Chamberlain's attempts to sell out the Spanish loyalists. The Soviet press was disgusted with the British failure to strike back when rebel bombers sank British steamers in Spanish harbors, and to stop the terrible bombing of the civilian population of Barcelona and Valencia.⁷ On April 4, 1938, "Observer," under the caption, "The crisis has been made twice as bad," declared the view of Soviet diplomats concerning British foreign policy. "Observer's" argument was that Chamberlain's diplomatic "successes" in Austria,

7. During the rebel "drive to the sea," the following dispatch in the *New York Times* (April 13, 1938) indicated the extent to which Soviet aid bolstered loyalist defenses.

"The 'last-ditch' defense of the Spanish Loyalists has been unexpectedly bolstered by the receipt of a considerable number of planes and of some artillery from abroad, it was learned here today.

"Neither the amount nor the make of the equipment was known, but it was presumed that both the planes and the artillery were of Russian manufacture or design. . . .

" . . . But in some quarters the recent slowing of the Insurgent offensive and the checks that Insurgent arms are reported to have received near Tortosa and elsewhere along the Ebro River were believed to be due not alone to the change of government in Barcelona but particularly to the receipt of more equipment from outside Spain. . . ."

China, and Lithuania had only made matters worse, while the attempt to reach an agreement with Italy had led only to intensified intervention in Spain, thus bringing the loyalists to the brink of disaster. All this, so the article stated, was preparing the way for the inevitable destruction of the British Empire; the collapse could be averted only if a man with a more realistic view of foreign affairs should come to power in Great Britain.

During the past six months the Soviet Union has been able to devote but little attention to Spain; the May crisis in Czechoslovakia, the events in China and on the Siberian border, and the second crisis over the Sudeten area were too important to leave much time for the Iberian peninsula. None the less, as occasion arose, the Soviet Union upheld the rights of the loyalists. On June 27, after the Spanish government had threatened to take reprisals against "the real agents of the bombings" of Spanish cities, and was itself warned by France and Great Britain of the probable consequences of such policy, *Izvestia* voiced sharp criticism of the two western nations for rebuking the wrong power. On July 11, an editorial claimed to have prevented the strangulation of the loyalists, which would have followed if, as was proposed, the French frontier had been closed before effectual sea control had been established. And, after the Munich conference, the same newspaper called the evacuation of 10,000 Italian troops "a plan to crush the Spanish Republic." Before Franco should receive the rights of a belligerent there should be evacuated, not 10,000, but 80,000 Italians, and all the other foreigners fighting against the Spanish people. This same argument was voiced on October 16 by Maisky, Soviet representative before the Non-Intervention Committee; he informed Lord Plymouth that his government was willing to grant belligerent rights to both sides, but only after "substantial withdrawals" of volunteers; moreover, he declared that the withdrawal of a mere ten thousand Italians was far from constituting a satisfactory evacuation.

It must be evident to all that in so upholding the cause of the Spanish Loyalists the USSR is fighting a difficult battle. After the Munich agreement at the expense of Czechoslovakia

there is little reason to believe that Chamberlain and Daladier will be more solicitous of the wishes of the Spaniards. None the less, the Spanish civil war is not yet over; and, if one may judge by the consistency of Soviet policy during the past two and a half years, the USSR will be found fighting to the last for the interests of the people of Republican Spain.

SOVIET ADVERTISING

By

HENRY WARE

To advertise or not to advertise was, of course, in the Soviet Union a purely theoretical question throughout the period of sale by ration. But in 1935 when ration cards were scrapped, and finally all types of stores opened wide their doors to the general public—then the decision had to be made either to rule out all advertising as an “evil of capitalism,” or to assign to it a carefully demarcated sphere of influence in the growing socialist economy.

With a continual planned expansion of the market, it was found before long that advertising not only would be desirable, but that it was practically essential. This decision soon was elaborated in speeches by high officials. At the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR in January, 1936, Molotov stressed the importance of Soviet advertising, saying, “The most important task for the food and light industries is the introduction of new kinds of products and their popularization with the masses by means of well arranged advertising.” On the same occasion, Food Commissar Mikoyan explained, “We are developing good Soviet advertisements which tell about excellent products, stimulate a taste for them, and help in popularizing these products.” It is just as true with the Soviets as it is with us that “it pays to advertise”; so also, when it does not pay, they do not advertise. Furthermore, the stores, restaurants, trusts, and other organizations which advertise have to pay their own expenses. Soviet trade organizations hire artists to dress show windows, they pay specialists to formulate newspaper advertisements, they engage the best musicians to put on radio programs, and now certain wholesale organs even have their own traveling salesmen.

The casual visitor who has seen Soviet store windows, news-

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paper and bill-board advertisements, who has heard the radio advertisements and seen still other advertisements in the movies is apt to come to the over-hasty conclusion that efforts are being made to take over American practices, hook, line, and sinker. While the Soviets are enthusiastic over the unexcelled achievements of what they term the "science" of American advertising technique, at the same time they are just as strong in their condemnation of the competitive waste involved, and they aim to make all their advertising socially useful, inculcating a wholesome desire for worthwhile products.

The Russians' claim to socially useful advertising lies in the fact that although Soviet stores compete, this form of "competition" is strictly limited within the bounds of the planned economy. In the first place, no worthless or harmful product would be advertised for sale since the carefully controlled nation-wide production plan would not permit it to be made. But aside from this, funds which may be spent on advertising are strictly limited by law, not to a fixed amount but to a proportion of sales amounting to not over a small fraction of one per cent of total sales.

This system might seem to discriminate against smaller enterprises. For instance, a large store or "ritzy" restaurant may be able to afford space in a newspaper, while, for a smaller restaurant the small net sales may make such advertising out of the question. The Soviets have solved this problem of bringing the small enterprises before the public eye without undue emphasis or confusion: when the size of an enterprise does not make financially possible the direct use of the more popular advertising media, then the trust advertises, perhaps listing all its stores where the particular goods may be purchased (roughly comparable to methods often used by leading American chain-stores). In this way, for instance, the Moscow Dairy Trust advertises its products. The Suburban Moscow Restaurant-Cafés of the Trade Union Rest Homes advertise in *Izvestia*, showing on a map the location of the towns where they serve the public. For such a composite advertisement, each of the restaurants included is assessed its small share by the trust.

The strict limitations on funds expended for advertising in the press apply equally to all other media of Soviet advertising.

Enforcing such regulations is an important aspect of the whole problem of carefully limiting competition within the plan.

In addition to the most important factor, the financial restriction to advertising activities, further limitation results from the fact that price competition is outlawed in Soviet stores. When the Advertising Bureau of the State Trade Publishing House passed out 75,000 hand-bills advertising "Button Week" in Moscow's Specialized Store No. 5, the whole event seemed to be without the appeal one might expect, for during this "special sale" prices remained unchanged. On another occasion, when a nation-wide planned slashing of prices occurred after many speeches and much other publicity, then a Moscow furrier featured, in his window, price labels with mark-downs and announcements of "bargains." This may have given him some satisfaction in memory of the "good old days" of free-for-all competition, but such labels and signs had no particular immediate appeal to the prospective customers. They served as little more than a reminder to the public that now furs could be bought cheaper, at any store, and at any time.

Unfair competition appears to be a much more strict concept in the Soviet Union than it is even in the U.S.A. In addition to the above mentioned restrictions, a Soviet product not only must not "insult" another Soviet product, but it must not even infer that it is superior if it is not. For instance, the advertisement "Spring Cakes are Superior with Tea" was rejected on the grounds that other cakes may be just as good as "Spring Cakes." The manufacturer of a product may advise the public to "ask for it anywhere" only if the extent of the output justifies. An agent in the small city of Voronezh was severely criticized for advertising in a journal of nation-wide circulation to "demand everywhere" Voronezh cakes, Voronezh meat products, Voronezh milk, etc. In this particular case the Journal, which was one of the publications of the Food Industries Commissariat, was accused of anti-social favoritism in accepting too many advertisements from its own pet trusts.

Even though Soviet firms are not permitted to spend fabulous sums for advertising, still they have found out through experi-

ence that spending too little on advertising is worse than not advertising at all. When their ads were so long-winded, so unartistic and so clumsy that they failed to impress the public, that was just so much waste. This situation is being corrected as rapidly as possible. Now it is generally recognized in Soviet business articles that ample effort, skill, and funds must be spent to guarantee effective "cultural" advertising. Store managers no longer have complete jurisdiction over their own store windows and other displays, for now an art commission is the judge as to what is or is not acceptable. Even signs over the stores now must meet very definite specifications. In addition to being artistic, they must be made of glass; and in most cases must be lighted in the evening if the store is still doing business. It was found to be unnecessarily wasteful of electricity, however, for stores to have their windows lighted all night, so that, even though a store may well afford this type of advertising, all its lights must be out by a certain hour, in conformity with broader social interests.

No radio advertisement is permitted without the sanction of the "program committee" which, we are told, makes very strict demands. No blunt and direct admonitions to "buy my product" are allowed over the air unless they are on the "aids-to-housewives" hour or on some other part of the program where people purposely tune in to get information on advertised products. All other advertisements (and there are very few) must be presented musically, poetically, or dramatically. Caucasian tea is sung, while bouillon cubes and home delivery service are dramatized with skits about the cross, hungry husband or the weeping wife who does not know what good luck is in store for her. Many feel that to date the greatest progress made in the development of Soviet advertising technique has been made in radio.

There is very little outdoor advertising in the USSR for aesthetic reasons. Nothing is allowed that would spoil the view or in any other way be publicly undesirable. Most large-scale outdoor advertisements are on the blank sides of old buildings which have no architectural beauty to preserve. But even these are very few. Perhaps there are twenty of them in the

city of Moscow. One very prominent sign tells you, with a decorative picture and a rhyme, that your children have learned at school the use of tooth-powder and that you should learn this "scientific method" from them. The unbroken side of an old six-story building tries to overcome an age-long European prejudice against corn by depicting a very attractive looking tin of it with the admonition that it is wholesome and widely used by the "Amerikantsii." Other Soviet advertisements are more dramatic in presentation than they are in effect. It is difficult to forget the pained expressions on the faces of a group of Moscovites in a park watching a very lively six-foot "Chatka Crab" jump in and out of a mammoth crab-meat can. And yet, this work of art and ingenuity existed for the express purpose of encouraging the consumption of crab-meat.

Practically all of the few bill-boards tucked into the suburban Moscow landscape advertise sausages: an attractive picture with the two words "eat sausages." We are told that this particular advertisement was designed by Soviet food experts who had visited America where they were particularly impressed by the "Drink Coca-Cola" signs.

As in the formulation of all other types of Soviet advertising, outdoor bill-boards and posters must be sanctioned by the art commissions. Each city and township has its own inspectors. Each trust, store, restaurant, or other advertising organization must sign a contract and pay rent for space to the city soviet or township authorities of the place where the bill-board is located. This is consistent with the Soviet policy that no individual or business organization shall make profit from the rent of land. Even in the case where "eat corn" is advertised on the side of a large Moscow department store, the store receives nothing for this. All the rent paid for this space goes directly to the Moscow Soviet. If a trust, store, or other organization is advertising on the side of one of its own buildings, however, no rent is paid at all. When the organization occupying a building has reason to object to a projected advertisement for its building, the city soviet is the mediator. A dairy store, for instance, would have a legitimate right to object to having its wall plastered by a competitor with an "eat margarine" sign.

In the city of Moscow the remarkable accomplishments of

the outdoor advertising art commission perhaps would fail to impress us if it were not for an interesting comparison. The Moscow Park of Culture and Rest and its decorations are the responsibility not of the Moscow Soviet but of the park officials. This was the explanation offered for the presence, in 1937, of atrociously unartistic, huge advertisements depicting a confusion of foods, all of which formed ugly super-structures on the roofs of the most prominent park buildings.

It was over a year after the Moscow subway had been opened that it finally was decided to allow advertising underground. Here, the public has its attention called to things almost exclusively of cultural value, such as literary and scientific publications. Of course, the various booths where cakes, candies, drug-store supplies and mineral waters are sold have their own show cases and signs with modest lettering on plate glass. The art censors are particularly severe in the subway so as not to allow advertising to interfere with the marble glory of these subterranean palaces of which the Soviets are so proud. In fact, a sombre panel of "eat margarine" is so sombre that you find it difficult to read even if you notice it. But after all the other impressively cultural advertisements, one cannot help wondering why margarine should be advertised here. We are told that, in the first place, Soviet margarine is a wholesome unadulterated product which needs boosting. Then it is explained further that the subway censors let down the bars to margarine partly as recompense for unjust injury done to that product by an over-zealous leader of the Young Communist League who, in a speech broadcast over a nation-wide hook-up, referred to "inferior products such as margarine."

A study of the appeals used in Soviet advertising shows that they usually are direct and basic. Good health, pleasure, comfort, pleasant taste, saving of time and money, and convenience are among the more popular appeals. Under Soviet conditions these direct appeals, largely discarded by American advertisers, are not in themselves a sign of backwardness. Direct appeal advertising need not become outmoded in the Soviet Union, because there are none of the conditions which would cause it to lose its effectiveness. Soviet manufacturing and trade regulations are such that the consumer learns to trust

rather than to distrust advertisements. When the customer learns through experience to believe what he is told about a product, advertisers are not driven to seek newer and more subtle appeals. At the same time, indirect appeals cannot be completely neglected. Although the Russians are showing signs of weakening in their "Puritanical" attitude toward sex-appeal in advertising, there is, however, no reason to believe that they ever will resort to "sure-success" vanishing creams or halitosis terrors. Only two years ago a Soviet advertising expert wrote denouncing the "hysterical" appeals to imitation, surprise and fear. But now the prudence motive is already in use in an advertisement for Soviet fire insurance. Other indirect motives for buying goods and services appear to be just as suitable when kept within logical bounds. Bouillon cubes and concentrated foods now are recommended as being nourishing and easy to prepare, and at the same time, it is pointed out, in an effort to overcome conservatism, that the heroes of the North Pole Expedition used them.

While the use of such appeals as individual selfishness, lust for power, social-set flattery, superiority and other motives which the Soviets consider anti-social, would be ruled out, in the USSR, other indirect appeals of a more social nature are now being developed more extensively. In fact, when one considers how advertisements of automobiles, radios, and furniture have "educated" the cautious and skeptical American buying public to the economic and social "necessity" of having the latest model, then one can well imagine the much greater power of public opinion which advertising exerts over the Soviet public which has confidence in what it buys. In fact, advertising techniques in posters, cinema and radio have long been used in the USSR for educating public opinion not only to teach new habits and the use of new products, but also to develop economic and social attitudes compatible with Socialism.

The rising importance of Soviet advertising cannot be overestimated. Since it concerns itself with the national problem of planning consumption, the Soviets may soon find it necessary to create a special advertising department of the State Planning Commission.

NEWS CHRONOLOGY

Newspapers are named primarily for convenient reference, although the same items may appear in other newspapers. The date given is the date on which the event occurred, while the number in parentheses following the name of the newspaper indicates the date of the paper in which the report appeared.

*The texts of decrees, treaties, etc., referred to in the items marked with an asterisk are available in full at the office of the American Russian Institute.



INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Administration

OCTOBER

- 4—The Sverdlovsk Oblast is divided into the Perm Oblast and the Sverdlovsk Oblast.—*Izvestia* (4)
- 21—The Far Eastern Krai is divided into the Khabarovsk Krai and the Primore Krai.—*Pravda* (21)

Agriculture

OCTOBER

- 4—An order is issued providing that workers on State Farms may own cattle for their own use.—*Izvestia* (4) *
- 15—Severe drought in a few areas is reported as having decreased the 1938 harvest. It will still be above the pre-war level.—*New York Herald Tribune* (15)
- 23—An order is issued to disband all enterprises on collective farms not directly connected with farming and to turn them over to the departments of local industry.—*Pravda* (23) *
- 27—An order is issued for measures to be taken to insure stable harvest yields in the southeastern regions subject to drought.—*Pravda* (27) *

Arctic

OCTOBER

- 2—The Soviet ship *Kamchadel* arrives in Vladivostok after spending a year in the Arctic ice.—*Izvestia* (2)
- 11—The Polar navigation season ends.—*Izvestia* (11)
- 15—It is announced that the Arctic Institute of the Northern Sea Route Administration is to organize fuel bases at known coal and oil deposits in the Arctic.—*New York Times* (16)
- 23—The icebreaker *Sedov* begins its second year of drifting in the Arctic ice.—*New York Herald Tribune* (24)

Art

SEPTEMBER

- 2—An *Izvestia* article calls for the purification of Soviet art from decadent modernistic influences, urging a return to the great painters of the Renaissance as models. Soviet humanism is laid down as the basis for socialistic art.—*New York Times* (31)

OCTOBER

- 17—Maria Mikhailovna Blumental-Tamarina, famous Russian actress, dies in Moscow.—*Pravda* (17)
- 26—The fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Moscow Art Theatre by Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko is marked with a performance of their first play, "Tsar Fyodor" by Tolstoi, produced in 1898.—*New York Times* (27)

Aviation

OCTOBER

- 4—Rescuers are sent to search for the three women flyers who were forced down in the taiga near Komsomolsk during an attempted non-stop flight from Moscow to Khabarovsk.—*New York Herald Tribune* (5)
- 22—Hero of the Soviet Union Briandinsky, leading Soviet flyer, is killed in an air crash.—*New York Times* (23)
- 27—Three women flyers, Osipenko, Grizodubova and Raskova, rescued after a forced landing at the end of their record breaking non-stop flight, are welcomed by Moscow citizens with a parade in their honor.—*New York Herald Tribune* (28)
- 28—At a reception given the three women flyers, Stalin announces that permits for record flight attempts will be severely regulated as a safeguard against undue risk of the lives of pilots.—*New York Times* (29)
- 29—Three designers are each given a bonus of 100,000 rubles and an automobile, for their development of new types of airplanes.—*New York Times* (30)

NOVEMBER

- 28—The Canadian Dominion Bureau of Statistics announces that the Soviet Union now leads in the carrying of freight by aircraft.—*New York Herald Tribune* (29)

Defense

AUGUST

- 21—The Commissariat of Defense issues an order calling the classes of 1917 and part of 1918 to their period of military service, beginning Sept. 1.—*Pravda* (21)

SEPTEMBER

- 5—Marshal Voroshilov reviews the annual war games in the Moscow district.—*New York Times* (7)
- 14—Autumn tactical maneuvers of the Soviet Navy begin in the Baltic and Black Seas and on the Pacific Ocean.—*New York Times* (15)
- 27—100,000 in Moscow participate in defense against an imaginary air raid, with a blacking-out of the city lights.—*New York Times* (29)

OCTOBER

- 18—Two new military awards are established: "For Bravery," and "For Military Services."—*Pravda* (18)
- 29—6,500 awards and decorations have been given out in the last two days to the participants in the fighting at Changkufeng.—*New York Herald Tribune* (30)

Industry

AUGUST

- 31—The 10,000 kilometre run of gas generator trucks is completed.—*Pravda* (31)
- Announcement is made that large scale production of these trucks is to take place soon, as a result of the successful run.—*New York Times* (Sept. 1)

SEPTEMBER

- 14—Draft model constitutions for trade unions are presented to the Seventh Plenum of the All-Union Council of Trade Unions by Secretary A. Moskatov.—*Daily Worker* (15) (See *Bulletin on the Soviet Union*, October 30, 1938)

OCTOBER

- 8—The first section of the Monchegorsk nickel-copper combinat is put into operation.—*Pravda* (8) (See *Bulletin on the Soviet Union*, Dec. 15, 1938)
- 10—Textile production is reported behind schedule in the RSFSR for the first half of 1938.—*New York Times* (11)

Miscellaneous

SEPTEMBER

- 6—750,000 Soviet young men and women march in celebration of International Youth Day; slogans urge the solidarity of youth throughout the world against war and fascism.—*New York Times* (7)
- 9-19—The text of the new Short History of the Communist Party is published in full in *Pravda*.—*Pravda* (Sept. 9-19)
- 10—A new issue of ruble notes is announced. The new notes will have pictures of the Red Army.—*Izvestia* (10)
- 11—Normal traffic on the second branch of the Moscow Subway opens today.—*Pravda* (11)
- 12—A model constitution for the schools of higher education is announced.—*Pravda* (12) (See *Bulletin on the Soviet Union*, Nov. 30, 1938)
- 21—An order is issued forbidding the resale in collective farm markets of industrial goods at prices higher than those at which they are sold in government stores.—*Izvestia* (21)

OCTOBER

- 23—An article in the organ of the Commissariat of Education calls on all school teachers to carry on anti-religious work among the pupils.—*New York Times* (24)
- 29—The Twentieth Anniversary of the founding of the Young Communist League is celebrated.—*Pravda* (29 ff.) (See *Bulletin on the Soviet Union*, Nov. 30, 1938)
- 30—A trial radio-telephone connection is established between Moscow and China.—*Pravda* (30)

NOVEMBER

- 4—A woman locomotive engineer is appointed director of the Moscow Ring Railway. She is the first woman to head a railway in the Soviet Union.—*New York Herald Tribune* (5)
- 5—A *Pravda* article criticizes the management of a leading Moscow department store for favoritism and embezzlement, causing a shortage of goods available for the general buying public.—*New York Times* (6)
- 7—The 21st anniversary of the founding of the Soviet regime is marked with a tremendous demonstration in which 2,000,000 Soviet civilians take part, in addition to the military parade.—*New York Times* (8)
- 14—It is announced that a statue is to be erected in Red Square to the fourteen year old boy who was killed by relatives for having informed authorities of his father's defection in withholding grain due the state.—*New York Herald Tribune* (15)

- 15—The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union decrees an intensive educational campaign designed to teach the principles of Marxism and Leninism on a broad scale.—*New York Herald Tribune* (16)
- 21—An article in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, organ of the Young Communist League, condemns moral laxity in young men and women.—*New York Times* (22)
- 22—Announcement is made of the unification of the Communist Party Press Section with its Propaganda and Agitation Department to form a single Bureau of Propaganda.—*New York Herald Tribune* (23)
- 23—A. V. Kosarev is removed as head of the Young Communist League together with four colleagues.—*New York Times* (24)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

European Affairs

AUGUST

- 31—An editorial in the *Journal de Moscou* warns that German aggression in Czechoslovakia would be dangerous for small states as well as for Great Britain and France; it further stresses the need for concerted practical measures by the great powers and reasserts the Soviet Union's pledge to live up to its obligations under the mutual assistance pact with Czechoslovakia.—*New York Times* (Sept. 1)

SEPTEMBER

- 5—*Izvestia* publishes prominently the statement by French Foreign Minister Bonnet that France will stand by her obligation to Czechoslovakia.—*New York Times* (6)
- 9—Soviet Foreign Commissar Litvinov and Rumanian Foreign Minister Petrescu-Comnen are reported discussing the possibility of the USSR being permitted to move troops and supplies through Rumania to Czechoslovakia in the event of an attack on the latter by Germany.—*New York Herald Tribune* (10)
- 10—The Soviet press states that there is no undue excitement in their country over the Czechoslovakian crisis, since the Soviet position remains the same, namely that of respecting its treaty obligations.—*New York Times* (11)
- 13—The *Journal de Moscou* restates Soviet Russia's faithfulness to her treaty obligations regarding Czechoslovakia.—*New York Herald Tribune* (14)
- 14—Foreign Commissar Litvinov is reported as having expressed suspicion over the reason for Chamberlain's proposed visit to Hitler at Berchtesgaden. He is said to have expressed the fear that Chamberlain was going for the purpose of making a deal.—*New York Times* (15)
- 14—The Soviet steamer *Tashkent* is reported to have been held for several days by Spanish fascist warships in the Mediterranean.—*Daily Worker* (15)
- 15—*Krasnaya Zvezda*, Red Army official organ, declares that Chamberlain's policy was to make an agreement with Germany and to help liquidate Czechoslovakia.—*New York Herald Tribune* (16)
- 16—Geneva correspondent for *Izvestia* writes that Hitler's main objective in Czechoslovakia is to force her to abrogate her pacts of mutual assistance with France and the Soviet Union and to substitute for them a four-power agreement among Germany, Italy, France and Great Britain, and thus to isolate the Soviet Union.—*New York Herald Tribune* (17)
- 17—An article in *Pravda* states that Chamberlain's visit to Germany was to effect a bargain at Czechoslovakia's expense and urges a firm front of democratic powers to check the aggressors.—*New York Times* (18)

- 21—The Soviet press denounces the Anglo-French plan of having Czechoslovakia yield the Sudeten area to Germany.—*New York Herald Tribune* (21)
 —In a speech before the League Assembly, Foreign Commissar Litvinov, defending Czechoslovakia and the preservation of peace through the legal machinery of the League, says that he had earlier told a French representative in Moscow, "We intend to fulfill our obligations under the pact, together with France, to afford assistance to Czechoslovakia by the way open to us; our War Department is ready immediately to participate in a conference with representatives of the French and Czechoslovakian War Departments in order to discuss measures appropriate to the moment."—*New York Times* (22)
- 23—The Soviet Foreign Office hands Poland a note threatening to denounce the Soviet-Polish non-aggression treaty of 1932 if Poland attempts to invade Czechoslovakia.—*New York Herald Tribune* (24)
 —Soviet officials at Geneva reaffirm the Soviet Union's readiness to go to the aid of Czechoslovakia and report that France has been told the exact amount of military aid the USSR is prepared to give. The same sources are reported to have said that the Rumanian Foreign Minister had renewed the pledge of his country to allow Soviet troops to pass through Rumania to Czechoslovakia, provided France and Great Britain fight on the side of Soviet Russia.—*New York Herald Tribune* (24)
- 25—It is reported from Geneva that Foreign Commissar Litvinov notified British officials that his country would appeal to the League to put pressure on Great Britain and France for the benefit of the Czechs.—*New York Times* (26)
- 26—*Izvestia* publishes the full text of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Treaty of Mutual Assistance, commenting that in case France fails to help Czechoslovakia, the Soviet government, according to the terms of the treaty, is not obliged to do so.—*New York Herald Tribune* (27)
- 27—British Prime Minister Chamberlain issues a communiqué to Hitler to the effect that in the event of a German attack on the Czechs, France would be bound to come to the aid of the former and that Great Britain and Soviet Russia would certainly stand by France.—*New York Herald Tribune* (27)
- 29—In a speech before the political commission of the League Assembly, Litvinov speaks in defense of Loyalist Spain, stating that the latter was entitled to the benefit of the principle of self-determination.—*New York Times* (30)
 —Soviet representatives at Geneva express disapproval of the Munich conference in which Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and Daladier are deciding the fate of the Czechs.—*New York Times* (30)
- 30—A Moscow radio broadcast announces that "France has lost her greatness" as a result of her participation in the Munich conference.—*New York Times* (Oct. 1)

OCTOBER

- 2—The Commissariat of Foreign Affairs denies the United Press dispatch that Daladier had been authorized to represent the USSR at Munich.—*Pravda* (2)
 —The British Embassy in Moscow is reported to have protested to the Soviet authorities against the alleged seizure of 3 British trawlers by Soviet warships in the Arctic Ocean.—*New York Times* (3)
- 4—The Commissariat of Foreign Affairs denies the stories in the foreign press that the Soviet Government was informed of the steps taken by other governments leading up to Munich.—*Pravda* (4)
 —In a discussion of the four-power settlement of the Czech crisis at Munich, the *Journal de Moscou* questions the value of France's word as pledged to Czechoslovakia and the USSR.—*New York Herald Tribune* (5)

- 10—Eleven leading Soviet aviators denounce Colonel Lindbergh as spreading lies concerning the weakness of Soviet air power in order to precipitate the surrender of Czechoslovakia to Germany.—*New York Herald Tribune* (11)
- 11—Soviet Ambassador to London, Ivan Maisky, enters a protest against a statement of Earl Winterton to the effect that Soviet Russia had made only vague promises of aid to the Czechs, due to the former's military weakness.—*New York Times* (12)
- 26—A Soviet newspaper accuses Prime Minister Chamberlain of trying to foment war against the Soviet Union, stating that the Munich settlement of the German-Czech situation was a step toward involving her in a war with Germany and Japan.—*New York Herald Tribune* (27)

NOVEMBER

- 6—Premier Molotov, in a speech made on the eve of the 21st anniversary celebration, restates the fact that his country was willing to fulfill its obligations to Czechoslovakia. He further accuses Germany of instigating the Japanese attack at Changkufeng.—*New York Times* (7)
- 26—Conversations held recently between Foreign Commissar Litvinov and Polish Ambassador to the Soviet Union Grzybowski led to a restatement of the peaceful intentions of both countries.—*New York Herald Tribune* (27)

AUGUST

Far Eastern Affairs

- 21—The Commissariat of Foreign Affairs protests to Japan over the torture of the crew of the *Refrigerator I* which had been detained in a Japanese port.—*Pravda* (21)

SEPTEMBER

- 2—It is reported from Tokyo that the decisions of the Japanese cabinet, kept secret for several weeks, include plans to strengthen Japanese forces on the Soviet-Manchoukuo border, after the consolidation of her gains in China.—*New York Herald Tribune* (2)
- 10—*Christian Science Monitor* correspondent, Demaree Bess, reveals the presence of the map of the Hunchung agreement of 1886 in a British travel book written during that period. The Soviets based their claim to Changkufeng Hill on this treaty.—*Christian Science Monitor* (10)
- 20—Mamoru Shigemitsu, Japanese Ambassador to Moscow, is shifted to London.—*New York Herald Tribune* (21)

OCTOBER

- 27—A group of prominent Chinese are reported demanding that Chiang Kai-shek seek cooperation with the Soviet Union and the continuation of resistance to Japan.—*New York Herald Tribune* (28)

NOVEMBER

- 5—It is reported from Shanghai that Chiang Kai-shek, together with a group of Soviet advisers, has chosen Southern Hunan Province for a new stand against Japanese. This will be done with new Soviet equipment in addition to Chinese.—*New York Herald Tribune* (5)
- 7—Soviet Defense Commissar Voroshilov, speaking at the 21st anniversary celebration, warns Japan against military adventures in Siberia.—*New York Herald Tribune* (8)
- 24—It is reported from Shanghai that the Chinese Nationalist Government has decided on a pro-Soviet national policy and that new bases are being built in northwest China near the Soviet border.—*New York Herald Tribune*.—(24)
- 28—Japanese Vice Minister of War tells munitions makers that Japanese armaments must be sufficiently extensive for a war on two fronts—the Soviet and the Chinese.—*New York Times* (29)

United States, Affairs concerning

SEPTEMBER

- 5—The Society for Jewish Farm Settlement in Russia announces the termination of its work in Soviet Russia, as being no longer necessary. This organization founded and financed by American Jews has worked for 17 years in conjunction with the Soviet government in settling 250,000 Jews on new collective farms.—*New York Times* (6)
- 21—Plans for the Soviet pavilion at the New York World's Fair are announced by V. V. Bourgman, Soviet Fair Commissioner. This building, designed by B. M. Iofan, is to be one of the largest at the Fair.—*New York Times* (22)
- 29—The text of President Roosevelt's appeal to the Soviet Union to exert her influence to avert war in Europe is printed in the Soviet press, along with the Soviet reply pledging its support.—*New York Herald Tribune* (30)

OCTOBER

- 25—Soviet furs are being offered on the American market at prices lower than last year, according to an American importer.—*New York Times* (25)

NOVEMBER

- 6—The cornerstone of the Soviet pavilion at the New York World's Fair is laid by Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, Constantin Oumansky.—*New York Times* (7)
- 7—President Roosevelt sends a message of good will to President Kalinin on the 21st anniversary of the October Revolution.—*New York Times* (8)
- 14—Mr. and Mrs. Rubens who were detained in Moscow last winter are accused of being spies in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, Red Army organ.—*New York Times* (15)
- 16—The fifth anniversary of the recognition of the Soviet Union by the United States is marked with numerous newspaper articles commenting on the value of friendship between "the world's two giants" and stating that both these countries are the targets of fascist intrigue.—*New York Herald Tribune* (17)

Miscellaneous

SEPTEMBER

- 7—B. S. Stomoniakov, Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs since 1926, is reported removed from his post.—*New York Herald Tribune* (8)

NOVEMBER

- 12—The succession of General Ismet Inonu as President of Turkey is received cordially by Soviet authorities.—*New York Times* (13) (See *Bulletin on the Soviet Union*, Nov. 30, 1938)
- 15—An editorial in the *Journal de Moscou* states that the anti-Comintern pact signed by Italy, Germany and Japan has been transformed into a military alliance.—*New York Times* (16)
- 17—Twenty years after the Germans were driven out of the Soviet Ukraine newspapers carry editorial comment on the fact that this may have to be done again, but that this time it will be fought out on enemy territory.—*New York Herald Tribune* (18)
- 20—The Soviet press condemns the anti-Jewish campaign of Nazi Germany.—*New York Herald Tribune* (21)
- An Englishman is arrested as he lands his plane on Soviet soil, without permission, in an attempt to take his Soviet wife out of the country with him.—*New York Times* (21)
- 28—Meetings are held throughout the Soviet Union protesting the persecution of Jews in Germany.—*New York Herald Tribune* (29)

29—At an interview with the Soviet press, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs said: "I am taking the opportunity which you are giving me today to say to you and through you to the general public of the Soviet Union that the foreign policy of Turkey in every way that it affects Turkish-Soviet relations has remained unchanged since the time when the knots of deep friendship were tied between the two countries. Our friendship with our great neighboring country is not a political fiction, but a real fact, having its origin in important events which have taken place since the establishment of the new regimes in Turkey and the USSR. I am especially happy to state that not only the foreign policy of my country but also the deep feeling of the Turkish people in regard to the USSR has experienced no change. . . ."—*Pravda* (30)

RECENT APPOINTMENTS

Antselovich, N. M.—Commissar of the Timber Industry of the USSR

Benediktov, I. A.—Commissar of Agriculture of the USSR

Bulganin, N. A.—Vice-Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and President of the State Bank

Ezhov, N. I.—Commissar of Water Transport of the USSR

Frinovskiy, M. P.—Commissar of the Navy of the USSR

Kaganovich, L. M.—Vice-Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and Commissar of Railroads of the USSR

Khokhlov, I. S.—President of the Presidium of Tsentsosoiuz of the USSR

Mikoian, A. I.—Commissar of Foreign Trade of the USSR

Skrynnikov, S. E.—Commissar of Agricultural Stocks of the USSR

ERRATA

On page 45 of the October issue of the *Quarterly*, the map marked *Figure 7*. September 1, 1937, should have been marked *Figure 8*. October, 1, 1937, and vice versa.

NEW THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS

Kataev, Valentin, *The Soldier Returns From the Front* (Vakhtangov Theatre)

Dramatization of the novel by Kataev, *I, Son of the Working People*. The soldier returns from fighting against Germany in the Tsar's Army only to find the Germans overrunning the Ukraine, his homeland.

de Molin, Tirso, *Devout Marta* (Moscow Theatre of the Lensoviet)

A seventeenth century Spanish drama.

Shakespeare, William, *Taming of the Shrew* (Central Theatre of the Red Army)

Solovev, V., *The Stranger* (Moscow Theatre of the Lensoviet)

A family composed almost entirely of Stakhanovites discover that the eldest son is consorting with "the enemies of the people."

CHILDREN'S THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS

Gaidovsky, *Tomorrow* (Kiev State Hebrew Theatre)

Orshansky, *Fate of the People* (Kiev State Hebrew Theatre)

Mikhalkov, Sergei, *Tom Kenty* (Central Children's Theatre-Moscow)

Adapted from Mark Twain's *Prince and the Pauper*.

OPERAS AND BALLETS

Balanchivadze, A., *Heart of the Hills* (Leningrad Kirov Theatre of Opera and Ballet)

Ballet—depicting a peasant uprising in Georgia.

Dunaevsky, I., *Golden Valley* (Moscow Theatre of the Operetta)

Operetta—story of a state farm in the Caucasus where drought is threatened due to a landslide cutting off the water supply.

Kabalevsky, Dmitri, *Vasilek* (Leningrad Maly Opera Theatre)

Ballet.

Liatoshinsky, B., *Shchors* (Leningrad Kirov Theatre of Opera and Ballet)

Opera—story of the legendary Ukrainian Bolshevik hero and his famous campaign against Petlura.

Paliashvili, *Abessalom and Eteri* (State Academic Bolshoi Theatre of Opera and Ballet)

Georgian opera

Taktakishvili, Shalvy, *Maltakva* (Tbilisi State Theatre of Opera and Ballet)

Georgian ballet—depicting the transformation of the Kolkhis swamps into flourishing subtropical plantations.

Vlasov, V., V. Fere and A. Maldybayev, *Life, Not Death*

Opera—depicting the struggle of the Kirgiz people against the Tsar culminating in the 1916 uprising.

MUSIC

Dzerzhinski, I. I., *Song of the Partisan* (Symphony)

Golubev, E., *Second Symphony*

Ivanov-Radkevich, *Triumphant Overture*

Khachaturian, Aram, *Poem to Stalin*

Knipper, Lev, *Poem of the Fighting Komsomols* (Choral piece)

Muradeli, Vano, *In Memory of Kirov*

Shaporin, Yuri, *On Kulikovo Field* (Symphonic poem)

Veprick, Aleksandr, *Symphony*

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December 1938

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